



# ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY

*THE WANDERINGS AND ADVENTURES  
OF A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT*



JAMES · CREELMAN ·

LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

GIFT OF

*James Breelman.*  
Accession 92755 Class 984 4

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY  
BERKELEY**

**Return to desk from which borrowed.  
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.**

**DEC 20 1947**

**NOV 30 1955 LD**



Compliments of James Creelman.



ON THE GREAT  
\* HIGHWAY \*

---

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation





James Creelman

# ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY

THE WANDERINGS AND AD-  
VENTURES OF A SPECIAL  
CORRESPONDENT \* \* \*

BY JAMES CREELMAN

LOTHROP PUBLISHING COMPANY  
BOSTON



COPYRIGHT,  
1901,  
BY LOTHROP  
PUBLISHING  
COMPANY.

ALL RIGHTS  
RESERVED

ENTERED AT  
STATIONERS'  
• HALL •

First impression October 9th, 1901  
Second impression November 20th, 1901

# *PREFACE*

\*       \*       \*

THESE pages from the experiences of a busy man are intended to give the public some idea of the processes of modern journalism which are gradually assimilating the human race. The newspaper reader, who sits comfortably at home and surveys the events of the whole world day by day, seldom realizes the costly enterprise and fierce effort employed in the work of bringing the news of all countries to his fireside; nor does he fully appreciate the part which the press is rapidly assuming in human affairs, not only as historian and commentator, but as a direct and active agent.

The author has attempted to give the original color and atmosphere of some of the great events of his own time, and leaves the duty of moralizing to his indulgent patrons. The human nature of men and women everywhere

\*                    *PREFACE*                    \*

---

is strikingly alike,—at least the author has found it so,—and if that fact has been demonstrated in this book, its purpose has been served.

The frequent introduction of the author's personality is a necessary means of reminding the reader that he is receiving the testimony of an eyewitness.

# CONTENTS

♦

♦

♦

<i>Chapter</i>		<i>Page</i>
I.	<i>The White Shepherd of Rome</i>	11
II.	<i>The Storming of Ping Yang</i>	32
III.	<i>Interview with the King of Corea</i>	55
IV.	<i>A Ride with the Japanese Invaders in Manchuria</i>	74
V.	<i>Battle and Massacre of Port Arthur</i>	94
VI.	<i>The Avatar of Count Tolstoy</i>	120
VII.	<i>Tolstoy and his People</i>	141
✓ VIII.	<i>"The Butcher"</i>	157
✓ IX.	<i>Familiar Glimpses of Yellow Journalism</i>	174
X.	<i>Battle of El Caney</i>	194
XI.	<i>Heroes of Peace and War</i>	217
XII.	<i>A Talk with Kossuth</i>	242
XIII.	<i>The Czar on his Knees</i>	256
XIV.	<i>Greeks on the Verge of War</i>	268



## CONTENTS



---

<i>Chapter</i>		<i>Page</i>
XV.	<i>Sitting Bull</i>	294
XVI.	<i>On the Firing Line in the Philip- pines</i>	313
XVII.	<i>A Race with a Woman for the Cable</i>	336
XVIII.	<i>In the Black Republic</i>	357
XIX.	<i>Newsgathering in the Clouds</i>	381
XX.	<i>McKinley, the Forgiving</i>	403

# *ILLUSTRATIONS*



					Frontispiece	
					<i>Facing Page</i>	
<i>James Creelman</i>	.	.	.	.	14	
<i>Leo XIII.</i>	.	.	.	.	58	
<i>Count Tolstoy</i>	.	.	.	.	124	
<i>The Charge at El Cancy</i>	.	.	.	.	198	
<i>Louis Kossuth</i>	.	.	.	.	246	
<i>King George of Greece</i>	.	.	.	.	272	
<i>Sitting Bull</i>	.	.	.	.	298	
<i>William McKinley</i>	.	.	.	.	406	



# *ON THE GREAT \** \*           *HIGHWAY*

## CHAPTER I

### *The White Shepherd of Rome*

**I**T was all very well to sit at an editorial desk in Paris and plan an interview with the Pope. But I had not been a week in Rome before I began to understand the seeming hopelessness of carrying profane American journalism into the presence of the white Vicar of Christ, sitting at the heart of the mysterious Vatican.

There was an enchanting sense of adventure in the thing. Yet a thousand years of unbroken tradition stood between me and the august head of the Christian world, whose predecessors had turned sceptres to dust and blotted out kingdoms.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The pavements and walls of the venerable city seemed to mock me. The stately cardinals listened and shook their heads. There was no precedent. The bare thought of a newspaper correspondent interviewing the Pope violated every sentiment of Papal history, from St. Peter to Leo XIII. The Apostolic Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla, advised me to abandon the idea. The Vicar General of Rome, Cardinal Parocchi, smiled at my enthusiasm and urged me not to waste any time on an impossible mission. Still I went from one prince of the Church to another, from palace to palace, from cathedral to cathedral.

The persistent spirit developed in an American newspaper office is not easily daunted. As the difficulties gathered, my ambition to interview the Pope grew more intense. It became an absorbing passion. It was with me when I wandered in the crumbling palaces of the Caesars or walked among the ruins of the Roman forum. It haunted me among the tombs of the popes in St. Peter's. I dreamed of it at night.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

And when every Cardinal and Bishop in Rome seemed to stand in the way, I went to Turin and entreated Cardinal Allimonde, King Humbert's friend, to help me. Alas! no; the Cardinal assured me that my quest was bound to end in failure. There were some things that American journalism could not accomplish.

Then to see Cardinal San Felice, the venerable "Saint of Naples." The gentle old man listened to the story of my efforts to see the Pope and shook his snowy head discouragingly.

"I cannot help you, my son," he said. "I know that it would be a great thing for a newspaper writer to be the first to interview the Holy Father. But I am too old to go to Rome to assist you, and a letter would accomplish little. The throne of St. Peter is guarded in a thousand ways against the shock of change, and what you propose would upset the traditions of ages. Still, Leo XIII. is a broad-minded, far-seeing statesman, and if he thought that a newspaper interview would serve the cause of Christianity he would not hesitate to make a new precedent."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

At this time kind fortune brought into my anxious life in Rome the friendship of an American sculptor, Chevalier Ezekiel, who lived and worked in a studio in the vine-grown ruins of the Baths of Diocletian. And to this friend I confided the tale of my attempts to penetrate the innermost door of the Vatican. As he sat there in his white sculptor's blouse and slanting velvet cap, beside a marble figure of the dead Christ, his face suddenly became radiant.

"I have it!" he said, throwing his cap on the table. "Cardinal Hohenlohe will help you."

So straight to the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore we went, and found the Cardinal in his palace, a stout, rosy, witty, German prince, once the bosom friend of Pius IX. Within an hour the Cardinal promised to lay the matter before the Pope. Three days later he sent for me and announced that His Holiness had consented to be interviewed.

"When?" I asked.

"Ah!" said the Cardinal, "no one can tell that. Perhaps after a week; perhaps after



*Leo XIII.*



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

six months. The Vatican moves slowly. It has the affairs of the whole world, civilized and uncivilized, to consider. You must wait. Rome will teach you how to be patient."

I left the palace drunken with joy. How my old comrades in New York would stare when they learned that I had reached the unreachable! How my newspaper would herald the feat to the ends of the earth! I could hardly keep my feet from dancing on the hot pavement. Rome, Rome, how I loved you that day!

The next day a message from Paris sent me to Brindisi to meet Henry M. Stanley, the explorer, who was on his way back from Africa, after rescuing Emin Pasha from the perils of the Equatorial Province. I was in the service of the newspaper that first sent Stanley into the "dark continent," and he gave me the materials for an exclusive despatch that, in other days, would have made me dizzy with pride. But as I walked along the stone quay of Brindisi with the weather-beaten man whose deeds had once inspired me with visions of the possibilities of my pro-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

fession, and heard him talk of the riches of Africa, my mind turned always to Rome. There was a terrible fear upon me. What if the Pope should send for me while I was away? The thought filled me with agony.

Stanley had picked me out of a score of newspaper correspondents, who stood enviously watching us as we strolled along the shore of the sparkling Adriatic Sea. And yet I wished myself in another place.

Two days later I was in Rome again, and early the next morning a Papal chamberlain came to the hotel with a summons to the presence of the Pope. The invitation included Monsignor Frederick Z. Rooker, the scholarly Vice Rector of the American college, who was to act as interpreter.

The governments of Europe had practically confessed in conference at Berlin that they could do nothing to check the onward sweep of the tide of social discontent that threatened the peace of nations. The German Emperor's international council on the desperate question of capital and labor was an admitted failure. What would Leo XIII. say? Would he, too,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

admit that accumulated and concentrated wealth had brought into the world problems unsolvable except by brute force?

No man can make that journey from the famous bronze portal of the Vatican into the presence of the imprisoned monarch, whom two hundred million human beings hail as the vice regent of Heaven and earth, without being thrilled from head to foot. I care not whether he be Protestant, Catholic, Jew, or pagan; whether he adores the Pope as the infallible Vicar of Christ, or regards him simply as the supreme teacher in a universal school—he will be profoundly moved by the solemnity and suggestiveness of that place.

To reach this sovereign of a ghostly empire we passed through the palace door that looks out upon the wide space in front of St. Peter's—once lighted by the burning bodies of Christian martyrs. Here stood a squad of the stalwart Swiss Guard, in brilliant costumes of red, yellow, and black, designed by Michael Angelo more than three hundred years ago. Ascending the royal stairway of marble that leads to the immortal Sistine Chapel, and turn-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ing to the right, up a flight of ancient steps, we were saluted by the Gendarmes of St. Peter at the entrance of the open courtyard of St. Damasus, which is half surrounded by corridors and halls glorified by the genius of Raphael, the tender colors glowing here and there through open windows.

This spot once echoed the steel-shod feet of Charlemagne. Here Napoleon stood among fawning cowards.

In one corner of the sunny courtyard was a cardinal's carriage and long-tailed horses; a tall, thin Monsignor in purple silk rustled by, and a white pigeon wheeled in alarm through the air as the great chimes began to strike the hour. A picturesque sentry, leaning on an antique halberd, guarded the door of a great marble stairway leading from the opposite side of the court. Passing through the door and mounting the stairs, we came to the vast hall of St. Clement. Here figures of Justice, Mercy, and Faith looked down upon a jolly company of the Pope's soldiers sprawled comfortably on a wooden bench in a corner, their glittering halberds leaning against the brilliant wall. There

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

was a ringing command uttered by some invisible officer, and the next instant the row of red, black, and yellow guards was saluting a stately, scarlet cardinal who passed without raising his eyes.

Imagine the feelings of a young American writer moving through that palace of eleven thousand rooms to interview a king without territory — trying to preserve his heathen news instincts in such surroundings!

A burly, white-haired servitor in crimson silk and knee-breeches met us at the outer door of the Pope's apartments, and to him I delivered the document which called me to the Vatican. Through one splendid chamber after another he led us, among historic tapestries and princely trappings of bygone pontiffs, until we reached the throne room.

Here we sat until Leo XIII. was ready to receive us in the next room. The great golden throne under the royal canopy was the gift of the workingmen of Rome to the Pope. Above it shone a triple crown, surmounting the azure shield, silver bar, and cypress tree of the Pecci family. The Pope is proud to sit upon a

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

throne given to him by the toilers of his own country.

After a while, a smiling chamberlain in purple silk, with a resplendent gold chain hung about his neck, came from the inner chamber. He chatted with Monsignor Rooker and myself for a few moments and then, opening the door, preceded us into the presence of the august head of the Christian world.

There, behind all the pomp and ceremony, sat a gentle old man, with a sweet face and the saddest eyes that ever looked out of a human head — the quiet shepherd of Christendom. He sat in a chair of crimson and gold, set close to a table. Behind him was a carved figure of the Virgin, and near it a smaller throne. He wore a skull cap of white watered silk, and a snowy cassock flowed gracefully about his frail figure, a plain cross of gold hanging upon the sunken breast. It was a presence at once appealing and majestic.

That moment I forgot my newspaper and the news-thirsty multitudes of New York.

As we advanced to salute the Pope, he held out his thin, white hand, on which gleamed a

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

great emerald. It was the Fisherman's Ring, the sign of Apostolic authority throughout the world. We knelt and kissed the outstretched hand, and Monsignor Rooker — being a Catholic — reverently pressed his lips to the gold-embroidered cross on the Pope's crimson velvet slipper.

His Holiness bade us be seated beside him. There was surprising vigor in his gestures, and his voice was clear, deep, and unwavering.

"You are very young," he remarked. "I expected to see an older man. But your nation is also young."

It is hard to describe the delicate courtesy and benignity of Leo XIII.'s manner.

"I have a claim upon Americans for their respect," he said with kindling eyes, "because I love them and their country. I have a great tenderness for those who live in that land — Protestants and all. Under the Constitution of the United States religion has perfect liberty and is a growing power for good. The Church thrives in the air of freedom. I love and bless Americans for their frank, unaffected character and for the respect

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

which they have for Christian morals and the Christian religion.

"The press—ah, what a power it is getting to be!—the press and the Church should be together in the work of elevating mankind. And the American press should especially be amiable and benevolent toward me, because my only desire is to use my power for the good of the whole people, Protestants and Catholics alike."

The Pope looked at me intently for a moment.

"You are not one of the Faithful?" he said.

"I am what journalism has made of me."

"You are all my children," said the Pope, patting my hand like a father. "Protestants, Catholics—all, all,—God has placed me here to watch over and care for you. I have no other aim on earth than to labor for the good of the human race."

"I want the Protestants of America as well as the Catholics to understand me. The Vicar of Christ is respected in the United States, but it is not always so in Europe."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

There was an indescribable ring of pathos in the Pope's voice. His lips trembled.

"Here we have in temporal control men who feel nothing but hatred for the representative of Jesus Christ and offer constant insults to the Holy See. Enemies of God armed with governmental power seek not only to grieve and humble the Holy See in my person, but to utterly break down the influence of religion, to disorganize and obliterate the Church, and to overthrow the whole system of morality upon which civilization rests. The power of paganism is at work in Europe again.

"These are times of social unrest and impending disorder. I recognize the good impulse that persuaded the German Emperor to assemble the Great Powers at Berlin and seek a cure for the disease that afflicts capital and labor. But there is no power that can deal with anarchy and social discontent, but organized religion. It alone can restore the moral balance to the human race. The result of the efforts which have been made by nations to live without Christian guidance can

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

be seen in the present state of civilized society — discontent, hatred, and profound unhappiness.

“I have watched the growing helplessness of the suffering working classes throughout the world with anxiety and grief. I have studied how to relieve society of this terrible confusion. While I live I will labor to bring about a change. The troubles of the poor and heavy laden are largely due to enemies of Christian morality who want to see Christian history ended and mankind return to pagan ways.

“Human law cannot reach the real seat of the conflict between capital and labor. Governments and legislatures are helpless to restore harmony. The various nations must do their work, and I must do mine. Their work is local and particular, such as the maintenance of order, and the enforcement of ameliorative laws. But my work as the head of Christendom must be universal and on a different plane.

“The world must be re-Christianized. The moral condition of the workingman and his employer must be improved. Each must look at the other through Christian eyes. That is

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the only way. How vain are the efforts of nations which seek to bring contentment to man and master by legislation, forgetting that the Christian religion alone can draw men together in love and peace. As the wealth of the world increases, the gulf between the laborer and his employer will widen and deepen unless it be bridged over by Christian charity and the mutual forbearance which is inspired by Christian morals. But if the foes of Jesus Christ and His Church continue to attack and revile the holy religion which inspires and teaches sound morals and has civilized the world, these social disorders, which are but signs on the horizon to-day, will overwhelm and destroy them.

“The continued existence of human slavery in pagan lands is another source of sorrow to me. As a means of abolishing slavery I have established missionary colleges and am sending devoted missionaries into Africa and wherever men are held in bondage. The true way to free them is to educate and Christianize them. An enlightened man cannot be enslaved. For that reason I shall devote the energies of the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

church to spreading knowledge among the poor savages. Humanity must aid me to teach these unfortunates and save them from slavery. We must work without ceasing until there is not a slave anywhere on earth."

His Holiness spoke with visible emotion about his desire for the disarmament of Europe.

"The existence of these vast armies is a source of displeasure and sorrow to the Holy See," he said. "The military life, which has been invested with a certain glamor, is injuring hundreds of thousands of young men. That fact must be apparent to every statesman who seriously considers the question. It surrounds young men with violent and immoral influences, it turns their thoughts from spiritual things, and tends to harden and degrade them. These armies are not only full of peril to the souls of men, but they drain the world of its wealth. So long as Europe is filled with soldiery, so long will all the labor represented by millions of men in arms be withdrawn from the soil, and the poor will be overburdened with taxes to support the system. The armies of Europe are impoverishing Europe.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"These great military establishments have another deplorable effect. They set one people against another and intensify national jealousies. The inevitable result is the growth of a spirit of anger and vengefulness. I long to see a return of peace and charity among the nations. Mighty armies confronting each other on every frontier are not consistent with the teachings of Jesus Christ."

I reminded His Holiness that the principle of arbitration rather than war had become a part of the national policy of the United States.

"Yes," said the Pope, "that is a true and wise principle, but most of the men who control the affairs of Europe are not governed by a desire for truth. See how they exalt godlessness! Look at the men whose names are selected here in Italy for honor after death!—men who died opposing and reviling Christianity—men like Mazzini."

That was the end of the first newspaper interview with the Pope. I knelt beside Monsignor Rooker and received the Apostolic benediction. Then His Holiness arose.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"I hope that you will omit the petty personal details which are so offensive in newspaper articles," he said. "They are trivialities and beneath the dignity of the press."

As we moved out of the room the Pope called me back to him, and placing his frail hands upon my head, his eyes brimming with emotion, he said in a voice of great tenderness :—

"Son, you are young and you may be useful to the world. May the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit go with you. Farewell!"

And as we retired we looked back at the slender white figure standing alone in the shadowy room — and I knew that I had been face to face with the most exalted personality of modern history. Of all the famous men I have met in my world-wanderings since that day, — statesmen, monarchs, philosophers, philanthropists, — I have seen no other man who seemed to have such a universal point of view.

---

Once more I saw the Pope, borne aloft on the shoulders of the Swiss Guard into the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Sistine Chapel in a scene of supreme splendor — the triple crown upon his head, jewels flashing on his bosom, the Sistine choir chanting Palestrina's deathless music, and clouds of incense floating over the heads of a procession headed by the Knights of Malta, and followed by a long train of cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and monsignori.

The sunlight fell upon lines of shining steel, nodding plumes, golden chains, shimmering robes of silk, and all the glittering symbolry of pontifical power and glory.

And gathered within the walls immortalized by Raphael and Michael Angelo, before the eyes of the assembled aristocracy of Rome, was a horde of American savages in paint, feathers, and blankets, carrying tomahawks and knives. At the entrance of the chapel stood Buffalo Bill, Buck Taylor, and Broncho Bill, while a troop of cowboys, splashed with mud, and picturesque beyond description, lined the human aisle beyond.

When the Pope appeared, swaying in his resplendent seat, high above the assembled host, the cowboys bowed their heads, the Indians

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

knelt down, and Rocky Bear, the surly old chief, made the sign of the cross.

The Pontiff leaned yearningly toward the rude groups and blessed them again and again.

---

A few days afterward I was permitted to walk in the ancient garden of the Vatican. It was a day of surpassing loveliness. Every wandering breath of air came laden with the perfumes of distant fields of flowers. Here Pius IX. used to ride on his white mule among the venerable groves, interspersed with fountains and statues; and here the poets of an elder time declaimed in the open air to the assembled gallants of the Papal courts.

I saw the herd of shaggy goats from Africa which were driven every day to the door of the Pope's apartments and freshly milked. I ate grapes in the vineyard that furnished wine for the Pope's table. I saw the Pope's summer retreat, and the little tea pavilion on the roadside, with the scarlet velvet chair, and the caged parrots screaming the Pope's name.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

I saw the snow-white deer, and the snow-white peacock — emblem of immortality.

Then my guide suddenly knelt in the road and crossed himself; and in the shadow of a mighty tree I saw a bent white figure, and a hand faintly waving the sign of the cross.



## CHAPTER II

### *The Storming of Ping Yang*

**H**EAR the story of the storming of Ping Yang by the Japanese army, in the heart of Corea—the hermit nation—and hear it from one who wrote by lantern light on the outmost ramparts to escape the terrific sounds of victory that roared between the shattered walls of the old city, while the reek of a thousand half-buried Chinese corpses rose from the darkened field over which the conquering soldiery still marched northward in pursuit of Corea's oppressors.

Lying on the parched grass at night, with my cracked lantern tied to an ancient arrow stuck in the ground, the breeze fluttering the clumsy sheets of native paper on which I set down the details of this historic struggle, I could hear the jolly whistling of my blanket-comrade, Frederic Villiers, the famous war artist, as he worked on his pictures in a wrecked pagoda two hundred feet away.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The armies of Asiatic barbarism and Asiatic civilization met on this ground to fight the first great battle of the war that ended in the fall of Wei-Hai-Wei and Port Arthur; and here Japan emancipated the helpless Corean nation from the centuried despotism of China.

The Chinese fired on the Red Cross, violated hospitals, beheaded sick soldiers, tortured prisoners to death, and used the white flag of peace to cover treachery, while the Japanese tenderly nursed Chinese captives and risked their lives to rescue the enemy's wounded. Japan covered herself with glory. I can bear witness to scenes of kindness and forbearance that shamed the military history of Europe. A nation that does not acknowledge Christianity planted the scarlet cross of Christ on the battlefield, and the thunder of the fight was scarcely over before the work of charity began among friends and foes alike.

The hoary city of Ping Yang, once the capital of the hermit kingdom, sprawls down to the edge of the Tai-Tong River, which is half a mile wide and without bridges. This

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

is the eastern boundary. Its crooked streets ascend gradually to the west and north, ending in steep precipices, crested with castellated stone walls overlooking the valley. Beyond are several small, timbered hills. Southward is a level plain, stretching westward from the river for three-quarters of a mile to a range of hills. The muddy river runs north and south. From the fortified heights can be seen a tumult of mountain tops in every direction. A thousand years ago Ping Yang was the strongest city in Asia. Its walls are thick and its gates massive and well placed on the plain.

In forty-two days the Chinese army built more than thirty earthworks outside the walls of Ping Yang. There were miles of new fortifications. Many of the walls were fifteen feet high, and it is hard to understand how troops with energy enough to work such a miracle of construction could be driven from their vast fortress by an attacking force of only ten thousand men.

To the south of the city the Chinese erected twenty huge fortifications, loopholed and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

moated. They were garrisoned by six thousand bayonets and artillery, reënforced by a body of picked Manchurian cavalry, armed with swords and lances fifteen feet long. On the other side of the river they built three strong earthworks.

The western and northern sides of Ping Yang were defended by a continuous chain of new works, some on the northwest angle being on the summits of hills. One fort was three hundred feet about the level plain. In this angle of the city, on the edge of a precipice, were massed three thousand five hundred Chinese infantry and cavalry from ancient Moukden, with a small force of artillery. Still farther to the west were forts on three hill-tops armed with Krupp and Gatling guns.

Everywhere on the broad walls were crimson and yellow banners — hundreds and hundreds of them. Each of the six Chinese generals displayed an immense flag, its size indicating his rank. The flag of General Yeh, the commander-in-chief, measured thirty feet and bore a single character representing his name. That flag now belongs to the Emperor of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Japan. When the Japanese vanguard reached Whang-ju, its commander mounted a hill five miles from Ping Yang and through his telescope he could see a tossing line of banners for miles along the line of fortifications. The Chinese officers strutted up and down the walls, preceded by their individual flags, while drums beat and trumpets sounded defiance.

As the Japanese army moved forward to the rescue, the Chinese generals made merry with the dancing girls of Ping Yang, renowned throughout Asia for their grace and beauty. All was pomp by day and revelry by night. The Chinese soldiers broke into the houses of timid Coreans, and treated their wives and daughters shamefully. Drunkenness and debauchery ran riot, and while the generals caroused with the dancing girls, the whole city was looted. Hell seemed to be let loose. The frightened inhabitants fled to the fields and forests — men, women, and children — and remained there until the Japanese army entered the city, when they crept back, many of them dying from starvation and exposure.

This was the situation when General Oshima

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

led a brigade of about four thousand Japanese infantry, cavalry, and artillery in sight of the three forts on the eastern shore of the Tai-Tong River. The Corean vassals were bowing their necks to the Chinese yoke for the last time. Ping Yang was to be attacked by four Japanese columns, marching from the coast by different routes. Oshima's force was to make a demonstration until the three other Japanese forces, marching in from the coast by different directions, had stolen into their positions around Ping Yang.

The Chinese commanders, in huge spectacles, heroes of many a classical debate, and surrounded by the painted, embroidered, and carved monsters of mythological war, but wholly ignorant of modern military science, awaited the oncoming of the trim little, up-to-date soldiers of Japan, with all the scorn of learned foolishness. The Chinese garrison, wearing boastful inscriptions on their breasts and backs, and clad in bright-colored apron-trousers and wide-sleeved fantastic jackets, were armed with American rifles, which they had recently learned how to use.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Gray old China, profoundly calm in the knowledge of blue and white porcelain, immersed in the scholastic beauty of the ancient odes, — lazy, luxurious, dreamy China — had bought a few thousand American rifles and German cannons.

Yet you may arm a fortress with the mightiest enginery of death that military science can evolve; you may equip men with the most cunningly perfect weapons and flawless ammunition; but unless the trained brain, and eye and body are behind the mechanical means of destruction, unless every unit in the army is controlled by the law of the whole, unless the flag represents to the soldier something more than mere authority, and war something nobler than the mere killing of men for pay — unless these elements are present, rifles, cannon, and repeating arms are in vain.

A few gentle, foolish Coreans skulked about the streets of Ping Yang in their white cotton garments and monstrous hats, and watched the swaggering Manchurian braves with a dim idea that the dapper, disciplined Japanese battalions, clad in close-buttoned

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

European uniforms, were marching to their doom.

The broad Tai-Tong River lay between General Oshima and the city. Two thousand Chinese soldiers were in the three fortifications in front of his brigade, and just beyond was an insecure bridge, resting on boats, hurriedly built by the Chinese. To reach this bridge and cross the river to the east gate of Ping Yang, it was necessary to take the three fortifications.

For two days Oshima attacked the triple fortress. Then, by a clever movement, his bayonets carried the southern breastworks.

The Chinese had advanced out of their works just before dark, sending a cow and a band of trumpeters ahead—a Mongolian skirmishing device. There was absolute silence in the Japanese ranks until the enemy was within a distance of three hundred feet. Then the Chinese column was swept by volley after volley, and took to its heels, followed by Oshima's cavalry, which was prevented from doing effective work by the dense brush.

That night General Oshima received word

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

from General Tatsumi, who had marched another Japanese brigade by a circuitous route to a position on the north of Ping Yang. Another strong Japanese force, under the command of Colonel Sato, had arrived from Gensan, and had taken up a position on the northwest of the city, within easy reach of General Tatsumi. General Nozu, the senior Japanese commander, had stealthily marched in from the southwest, and his brigade lay in a valley between two small hills on which his artillery was placed. Ping Yang was surrounded.

Japanese couriers stole from camp to camp in the darkness, and the Japanese commanders agreed that the original plan of attack should be followed. Meanwhile, the Chinese drums throbbed riotously in the city, and the dancing girls beguiled the Chinese generals.

As the night wore on, the tired Japanese troops moved silently on all sides toward the city. The moon was shining brightly, and a light breeze came from the northeast. The Japanese ranks were as perfect as though the army were on parade. It is a peculiarity of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the Chinese army that its pickets and outposts keep close to the fortifications, so that the garrison of Ping Yang had no warning of the advancing enemy until at three o'clock in the morning the skirmish lines of the four Japanese columns opened fire.

General Tatsumi's infantry lay under a round fort on the crest of a steep bluff — the very spot where Konishi, the Japanese conqueror, broke into Ping Yang with his army three centuries before. A battalion of Japanese bayonets dashed up the steep heights, while another detachment of infantry charged around the base of the hill into a wooded valley, filled with graves, and, in the midst of them, the gorgeous tomb of Ki Cha, the founder of Corea.

The Chinese host swarmed down the heights to meet their foe, fighting desperately with Winchester rifles. There were officers in front and officers behind, waving their swords, and urging on the Manchurian braves. From the walls above a storm of lead cut the leaves and branches from the trees, but the Japanese kept well under cover, and drove the Chinese up the hill foot by foot.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Just at daybreak two companies of Japanese infantry made a bayonet charge straight up the hill, in the teeth of the concentrated fire of five hundred repeating rifles. The gallant little men broke into cheers as they emerged from the trees and climbed the precipice, while the Chinese infantry retreated in confusion to the round fort, many of them throwing their rifles away.

As the glittering line of bayonets swept up to the rough walls and the shouts of the advancing soldiers rang out over the ramparts, the Chinese garrison abandoned the fort and fled behind the walls of an inner fortification. A few leaped over the precipice, and their mangled bodies rolled down into a stream. Captain Koqua, who led the bayonet charge, fell as he advanced to attack the second fort. At eight o'clock the garrison in the second fort retreated to the inmost fortification, and the Japanese poured in through a gate, bayoneting the fugitives as they ran. The Manchurians fought magnificently as individuals. Nothing could be finer than the courage with which they faced the terrible volleys of the Japanese in-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

fantry, but the moment a charge was made they ran like frightened animals, tearing the uniforms from their bodies and dropping their weapons.

Now the artillery in the forts on the hills all around the city began to roar. General Nozu's batteries on the western eminence played upon the Chinese forts to the north, which were being attacked on the other side by Colonel Sato. His cannon also kept the twenty forts on the south of the city in a state of panic and prevented them from concentrating their fire against Oshima's lines. Nozu's infantry and cavalry scoured the valley under the western walls of the city, and by a deadly cross fire kept the Chinese garrison in the northwest angle of Ping Yang from escaping the volleys of Tatsumi's troops, who had already taken two lines of fortifications.

A terrific battle was in progress on the other side of the river, where Oshima's troops charged the three forts again and again under a terrible artillery fire, while his howitzer batteries tore gaps in the Chinese ranks. The Japanese soldiers were horrified by the sight

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of the Chinese hacking off the heads of prisoners in the distance, and they fought furiously, charging up to the very muzzles of the enemy's cannon. One of Oshima's battalions charged a fort on the bank of the river and carried the outer walls. Here the troops fought for hours almost hand to hand, but the Chinese held the walls bravely, while a body of their sharpshooters, lying behind the bushes at the edge of the river, kept up a deadly enfilading fire against the left flank of the Japanese. All the ground on this side of the fortification lay over subterranean powder mines, but the Chinese in their excitement forgot to explode them.

The great mass of forts on the southern side of Ping Yang rained shot and shell across the river, and the drifting cannon smoke was reddened with the flames of Gatling volleys and infantry fire. The death cries of men and horses swelled the giant chorus of battle, but the yells of the infuriated Japanese soldiers could be heard above it all as they closed in upon the forts and attempted to scale the walls.

The city was half hidden in battle smoke, and the crimson and yellow banners of the Chinese

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

were riddled with bullets. Blood, blood everywhere—on the walls, in the rippling river, on the green hillsides, in the flowering valleys. Blood trickling over gravestones, blood dashed against the walls of the ancient temples, blood on the rocks, blood on the roof-tops—everywhere the cold gleam of steel in the swirling cannon mist and sheeted flame; and away off in the treetops or cowering in the grain-fields the terrified Coreans, listening to the sounds of the mighty struggle that was to make them free or confirm their slavery.

An hour after the battle opened in the darkness, two companies of Oshima's infantry crossed the Tai-Tong River in small Corean boats below the twenty southern forts, and boldly advanced upon the bewildering labyrinth of walls. Between the attacking companies and the forts was a wide moat filled with water and mined with torpedoes. A thousand Chinese bayonets advanced to meet the Japanese, but were driven back across the moat, inside of the fort.

The sky darkened and rain fell. To the amazement of the Japanese soldiers, the Chinese troops planted huge oiled-paper umbrellas

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

on the walls of their forts to keep them dry while they fought. In every direction Chinese umbrellas could be seen, glistening like turtles on the earthworks.

Now came the most magnificent spectacle of the battle. The garrison in the city, unable to withstand the withering fire of the Japanese, were attempting to feel their way out. A body of two hundred and seventy Manchurian cavalry, mounted on snow-white horses, moved from the northwest angle of Ping Yang, galloped along a road skirting the city's western wall, and on reaching the southern end of the road, suddenly wheeled and charged down the valley, where Nozu's troops were stretched across from hill to hill between his batteries.

On went the splendid troops of warriors, and the earth shook as they thundered into the valley, with their long black lances set and pennons dancing from the shining spear-points. A few were armed with rifles and bayonets. On, over the stream and through the rice-fields, a heaving mass of blue and scarlet, rising and falling on billows of white horses and bristling with steel.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Not a man stirred in the Japanese line, as the Manchurians swept down on the centre, prepared to cut their way through and escape. When the cavalry were within two hundred feet, the earth seemed to open and vomit smoke and flame, as the united Japanese infantry and artillery opened fire upon the doomed horsemen. Horses and riders went down together, and were hurled in bloody heaps. Forty of the Manchurians escaped through the line, but were cut in pieces by a separate company of Japanese cavalry in the rear.

Three hundred more rode out from the artillery-swept heights — three hundred brilliantly clad warriors, also on white horses. Halting for a moment, and setting their long lances, they charged down the slope. The dense smoke in the valley prevented them from learning the fate of their comrades who preceded them. As they galloped forward, the Chinese artillerymen cheered them. Down into the gray mist of death they went, and when they reached the middle of the valley, the Japanese line fell upon them. Not a man escaped. A third charge of a hundred horsemen resulted in utter annihilation.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The scene was horrible beyond words to tell, and the streams on either side of the valley road were red with Chinese blood. After the battle, there were counted in a space of two hundred yards the bodies of two hundred and seventy horses and two hundred and sixty men.

The rain continued to fall in torrents, and the Chinese soldiers on the walls, huddling under their umbrellas, blazed away blindly. All this time the storming party in the two captured fortifications at the northwest angle of the city was pressing the troops in the inner forts, sending volley upon volley over the walls. This was the key of the situation. The Japanese commanders could see the great flags of the Chinese generals just beyond.

At four o'clock in the afternoon the Chinese hoisted a white flag on the inner fort, and a party of Japanese officers descended from the captured positions to parley at the gate. The Chinese officers gravely announced that it was impossible to surrender in the rain, as the wet weather prevented them from making the proper arrangements for a capitulation. If the Japanese would stop fighting until the next

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

day, and the weather cleared, the city would be surrendered.

The watchful Japanese officers observed Chinese troops stealing forward along the walls under cover of the flag of truce. They answered that an army that could fight in the rain could also surrender in the rain. They insisted that the hoisting of the white flag over the enemy's works was an act of surrender and demanded that the gate should be thrown open so that the Japanese troops might enter without further bloodshed. Again the bedizened Chinese officers pleaded for delay. It was raining very hard, and the mud was very deep. It would be a terrible thing to move the garrison out of shelter; but to-morrow they would cheerfully go away.

It was evident that the crafty Chinese were merely trying to gain time. The Japanese renewed the assault and fought long into the night. Every now and then flights of Corean arrows came whizzing through the darkness. The Chinese were forcing the childish native soldiers into the fight, slashing them over the shoulders with whips. Hour after hour the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

hungry and exhausted soldiers struggled on the slippery and bloody hill. Those who were killed fell headlong over the ramparts into the valley. The rain beat in the faces of the fighters and drenched their bodies as they pressed on in the gloom, their path lit only by the blaze of the rifle volleys. The fighting had ceased on all other sides of the city. The whole Chinese garrison, with the exception of the Moukden troops defending the northwest angle had fled in the darkness between the forces of Colonel Salo and General Nozu.

As the Chinese retreated through the valley they cut the heads and hands from the Japanese dead. They broke into the Japanese hospital quarters, butchered and beheaded the wounded men, and swept to the north with their dancing girls and bloody trophies.

The Japanese fighting on the heights above caught a glimpse of the flying troops among the trees in the valley below and sent a volley into their flank.

After twenty-two hours of continuous fighting General Tatsumi's infantry carried the inner fortifications of the northwest angle by sheer

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

dash. At one o'clock in the morning they scaled the walls. The Chinese garrison howled and ran about like hunted wolves. They jumped over the parapets and crawled under the bushes. As they ran they threw away their arms and uniforms.

Meanwhile General Oshima's brigade had gained the rude bridge on boats and had crossed the river. A bullet wounded him in the side, killed the interpreter behind him, and passed through a regimental flag.

Thirty Japanese war correspondents, armed with enormous swords, entered Ping Yang at the head of the army, and fought until they were exhausted. The general was compelled to issue an order prohibiting newspaper men from fighting.

When day dawned Ping Yang was in the hands of the Japanese army. The scene around the city was ghastly. For miles the ground was littered with dead men and horses. Thousands of gay Chinese uniforms were scattered on the field. At the first sign of defeat the officers and men had stripped themselves of their outer clothing in order to claim immunity

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

as merchants. Nine hundred prisoners were taken, and not a man was in uniform.

All along the ramparts of the city the ground was covered with empty cartridge shells. In some places they lay an inch deep. Thousands of birds of prey were feeding on the dead lying among broken lances, overturned cannons, heaps of camp wreck, torn banners, swords, and dead horses.

That victory ended the power of China in Corea.

After gathering the story of the battle, I travelled in a junk down the Tai-Tong River and thence along the Corean coast in a steamer to Chemulpo. From that city a messenger took my despatch over the sea to Japan, and from there it was sent to San Francisco and telegraphed across the continent to New York.

When I arrived in the dirty little Corean seaport, weary and sickened by the bloody field of Ping Yang, a messenger handed me a cablegram from Ohio. It contained two words — “Boy — well.” It was the announcement of the birth of my first child. Thirteen tissue paper tags, bearing the seals of thirteen differ-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ent headquarters of the Japanese army, showed that the news had been carried from battlefield to battlefield to reach me. The news of a new life was brought to me from the other side of the world, just as I sent word of a thousand freshly slain.

That night, on my way back to Ping Yang, I found the main Japanese fleet at the mouth of the Tai-Tong River. Admiral Ito had defeated the Chinese fleet, and had just fallen back on the Corean coast for repairs and ammunition. It was a great opportunity for a war correspondent. No other newspaper man had reached the victorious fleet, and fortune had given to me the first story of the most important naval fight of modern times — the battle of the Yalu.

When I boarded the flagship *Hashidate*, Admiral Ito was asleep, but he dressed himself and sent for his fleet captains in order to help me out with the details of the conflict.

As the Japanese admiral sat at his table, surrounded by his officers, with the rude charts of the battle spread out before him, he looked like a sea-commander — tall, eagle-eyed, square-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

jawed, with a sabre scar furrowed across his broad forehead; a close-mouthed man whose coat was always buttoned to his chin. Bending over the maps and smoothing out the paper with his sinewy, big-knuckled hands, the lamp-light gleaming against his powerful face, he was a man not easily forgotten.

And when the tale of that thrilling struggle on the Yellow Sea was over, the admiral turned to me smilingly.

“It is a big piece of news for you,” he said.

“Yes,” I answered, “but I have received a still greater piece of news.”

Then I drew from my pocket the cablegram announcing the birth of my boy, and read it.

“Good!” cried the admiral. “We will celebrate the event. Steward, bring champagne!”

Standing in a circle, the admiral and his captains clinked their glasses together and drank the health of my little son.

## CHAPTER III

### *Interview with the King of Corea*

ONE night as I slept in my field-dress on the floor of a captured Ping Yang palace, I was awakened by the sound of angry voices, and saw the treacherous native governor of the province, lying bound in his splendid silken robes, like a great scarlet butterfly, with a stern little Japanese colonel standing over him, and commanding his soldiers to strip the white jade pigeon—a sacred sign of authority—from the trembling prisoner's official hat.

"I could do nothing but submit," whined the governor. "The Chinese army had possession before your army came."

"You are a coward and a traitor," growled the colonel, spurning the prisoner with his foot.

So, almost from the time of Christ, the Corean nation had crouched in fear between

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Japan and China, prostrating itself alternately before the rival thrones.

A traveller in Corea is bewildered by the effects of three thousand years of hermit life upon this strange people. They are not savages. Thirty centuries of civilization are set down in their literature. Nowhere else in the world have I seen such magnificent specimens of physical manhood. The ordinary European is a pygmy among the tall, straight, powerful Coreans. An indescribable gravity and dignity of manner lends itself to the impressive grace and strength and the noble features of this ancient race. As the men become old they grow long beards, which add to their naturally majestic bearing.

Yet the Coreans are the emptiest-headed, most childlike, and most generally foolish people among civilized nations. They are the grown-up children of Asia. Their ignorance is not like the ignorance of Central Africa. Hundreds of years ago, they inspired Japan with the love of art, and their literature is as old as Egypt. They are gentle and meditative. Throughout the Corean peninsula, stately quo-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

tations from the noblest Chinese odes are painted on the public buildings, in the quaint summer pagodas, and on the walls of dwelling houses. Their very battle flags are inscribed with philosophic sayings.

But the Coreans are drugged with abstract scholasticism and demonology. They are credulous almost beyond belief. A white-bearded, spectacled Solomon, who can recite whole poems from the Chinese classics, will tell you gravely that there are not more wells in Ping Yang, because the city is an island and, if too many holes were cut in the bottom, it might sink. There is a spirit for the hill, another one for the valley, another for the rice-field, another for the woods, another for the river, another for the house, and so on, endlessly. Cut off from active intercourse with other nations for thousands of years, the Coreans represent the most remote ages of mystic Oriental civilization.

The mountainous, many-templed peninsula has been swept by many wars. More than a century before the Christian era began, the native king defeated a Chinese army on the banks of the Tai-Tong River. Nearly seven



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

hundred years afterward, the Emperor of China sent three hundred thousand soldiers to conquer Corea and failed. His successor raised a force of a million warriors, armed principally with trumpets, banners, and gongs, and was again baffled. More than two hundred thousand of the yellow host died on the soil of Corea. And yet, a generation later, China sent another army to subdue the hermit nation. Corea massed a hundred and fifty thousand lancemen, swordsmen, and archers. A great battle was fought near Ping Yang, and after twenty thousand of his men had been slain, the Corean general surrendered and the Chinese divided among themselves fifty thousand horses and ten thousand coats of mail.

War after war reddened the mountains and valleys, and still a native dynasty remained on the hermit throne of Corea, the same profound desire for isolation from the rest of the world pervaded the people.

Three centuries ago Japan invaded the little kingdom. The King of Corea appealed to China for help. The Japanese defeated the united Chinese and Corean armies, and, after one



*The King of Corea*



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

battle cut off the ears and noses of thirty-seven hundred dead enemies, packed them in casks, and sent them to Japan to make the famous ear-mound of Kioto. Three hundred thousand houses were burned when the conquering army put the city of Keku-shiu to the torch.

In spite of her centuries of suffering, in spite of the invasions and rebellions, Corea remained a recluse among the nations. Her king cheerfully consented to be the vassal of China or Japan, or both at the same time. All he asked was to be let alone with his gentle, dreamy people and his soft-eyed dancing girls.

This was the attitude of the King of Corea when I talked with him at Seoul. He was grateful to the Japanese for emancipating him from the Chinese, but he hinted that some nation—the United States, for instance—might find it convenient to emancipate him from the emancipators. He longed for a return to the ancient national quiet—philosophy, poetry, and solitude.

Not having eaten of the lotus flower, I felt criminally modern in this venerable country. The solemn old men, with their big spectacles, flowing beards, umbrella-like hats, yard-long

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

pipes, and calm faces, pacing majestically along the narrow streets or on the winding mountain paths, seemed to rebuke the news-hunting fever in my veins. What was an American newspaper—born every morning only to die at night—to that mild, contented people, whose civilization had survived the shocks of three thousand years? What could the telegraph, telephone, steam engine, or printing press add to their happiness?

The native crew of the junk that carried me down the Tai-Tong River from Ping Yang mutinied. I called the leader to me and let him look through my powerful field-glasses. Then I allowed him to look through the wrong end of the glasses. After that I unscrewed one of the lenses and, concentrating the rays of the sun, burnt a hole in the wooden deck.

That settled it; the crew surrendered and went to work. But not one of them dared to touch even my clothes, lest I might bewitch him.

At Chemulpo I saw a gigantic Corean porter, who could lift twelve hundred pounds on his shoulders, burst into tears when my eighteen-year-old Japanese interpreter slapped his face.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

He was strong enough to have killed the interpreter with a single blow ; but it never seemed to occur to him to strike back.

When I reached Seoul, the picturesque capital of Corea, having slept in my riding boots all night on the deck of a little British steam launch beside Dr. Sill, the American minister, I found that the King — alarmed by the presence of the victorious Japanese army on his soil — had refused to receive any more visitors, withdrawing himself even from direct communication with the foreign ministers.

An interview with the King would give a quaint variety to the endless descriptions of fighting. The American public must be allowed to see the inmost throne of the royal palace ; American journalism must invade the presence of the hermit monarch — to touch whose person was an offence punishable by death — see his face, question him, and weave his sorrows into some up-to-date political moral. The artificial majesty of kings, after all, counts for little before the levelling processes of the modern newspaper power. It may be intrusive, it may be irreverent, it may be destructive of sentiment ; but it

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

gradually breaks down the walls of tradition and prejudice that divide the human race. It introduces the king to the peasant. It makes the East known to the West in an understandable dialect. It is the subtlest, swiftest element in the chemistry of modern civilization.

There was one foreigner alone who could reach the King at that time—the King's doctor. That man was Dr. Horace N. Allen, then Secretary of the American Legation, and now American Minister to Corea. A sovereign who lives in daily dread of poison is bound to be on intimate and friendly terms with his physician. Through Dr. Allen's intercession I secured his Majesty's consent to an interview.

But how was I to secure the conventional swallow-tail costume in which I must appear in the palace? My rough corduroy riding dress, spurred boots, flannel shirt, and slouch hat were all I had. The situation was tragic. The American Legation sat in council on the subject and solved the problem. The American Minister lent me a tall hat, white shirt and collar. A naval lieutenant lent me a pair of black trousers, and an officer of marines contributed a swallow-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

tailed coat with a vest to match. I borrowed the shoes of the Minister's son. Thus arrayed, with the Minister's generously large hat slipping down on my ears, I went with Dr. Allen to see his Majesty, Li Hsi, ruler of the Land of Morning Calm, in behalf of the shrieking, newspaper-worshipping American multitude.

We were carried in curtained sedan chairs through the swarming, crooked streets of old Seoul to one of the great gates of the palace. There we alighted, and followed a solemn *chusa*, clad in a blue silk robe adorned with white stocks, who trudged on before us into the royal grounds in big, ceremonial, black cloth boots.

The King's palace consists of four or five hundred rambling houses set within giant stone walls. Acres and acres of dull tiled roofs rise above tawdry dwellings daubed with red, blue, yellow, and white, with here and there fantastic gargoylees of carved wood peering out from under quaint Asiatic eaves.

There was an air of desolation over it all. The hall and lotus pond, where the King languished among his dark-eyed dancing girls,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

were deserted, and spiders were spinning their webs across the entrance. Water purled wantonly from a broken fountain. A shattered door, gilded and tinted, lay at the side of an empty shrine. Now and then a lazy official in an enormous hat and silken robe shambled out of a doorway, and looked at us. The sleepy, dilapidated sentries presented arms — many of them guns without locks — as we passed through the age-worn streets of the royal demesne. Once we caught a glimpse of a woman's face, half veiled, at a window — probably one of the King's beautiful slaves.

Three thousand people usually live in the palace grounds, but that day it was like a deserted town but for the slouching, uneasy guards. Treachery lurked in every shadow; murder crouched in every street. Only a few months later the Queen — she who poisoned so many of her rivals — was assassinated in these grounds and burned to ashes.

We walked for about a quarter of a mile among the old buildings, and then we came to an open pavilion surrounded by latticed

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

screens, where Hong Woo Kwan, the moon-faced interpreter of the American Legation, clad in a richly embroidered court dress, met us, and seated us at a small table. A moment later a smug, smiling Corean rustled in, shook hands with himself, and bowed to us. He was the King's cook, a man not to be overlooked in a monarchy whose destinies are so often controlled by poison. Champagne and cigarettes were set before us. Here we sat until the King sent word that he was ready, and the guard was turned out to salute us.

The way led through a small wooden gate guarded by seven or eight awkward soldiers, three of whom were without arms. A few steps along a crooked lane, lined with gorgeously painted little houses, brought us to another small gate, also closely guarded, and, on passing through it, we found ourselves in a curious paved courtyard, on the opposite side of which was a frontless room, raised above the ground like a stage in a theatre, with wooden steps at the side leading up to it. As we crossed the yard and ascended the steps, we could see the King surrounded by

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

his palace officials — remarkably like a grouping in some drama.

In another moment I was face to face with the unhappy sovereign of Corea. He stood behind a table, in front of a gaudily upholstered European chair, with his small, nervous hands crossed lightly over his ceinture,—a slender, shy man, with an oval face, thin, silky mustache and chin beard, a kind, voluptuous mouth, and soft, dark eyes. He had the eyes of a beautiful girl. When he smiled he hung his head on one side, half closed his eyes, looked straight at us, and opened them slowly with the expression of a bashful woman. The King did not extend his hand. To touch him intentionally is death; to touch him by accident means that the offender must wear a red cord around his wrist for the rest of his life. It was once a capital crime to look at him in the streets. The King's person is divine. When he goes abroad in his city all doors must be shut and the owner of each house is compelled to kneel before his door with a broom and dustpan in his hand as emblems of humility. All the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

windows must be sealed lest some one should look down upon the monarch. So sacred is the person of the King, that when he moves outside of his palace two sedan chairs, exactly alike in appearance, are carried by the guards, and no one but the highest ministers knows in which chair the King sits.

Yet I could see no good reason why an American newspaper correspondent should not be quite comfortable in the presence of this exalted being. He was for the moment simply "a big piece of news."

The King was clad in a crimson silk robe with wide sleeves, yoked at the shoulders with cloth of gold, and caught at the waist by a gold-buckled, loose, black belt. A haze of black gauze covered the royal mantle, and a sparkling jewel held it across the breast. He wore on his small, shapely head a strange structure of stiffened black net, not unlike the semi-transparent framework of an American woman's bonnet. It rose in the form of an exaggerated Phrygian cap, and was provided with grotesque, black wings standing upright. The monarch's legs were enveloped

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

in huge, baggy trousers of white silk, and his swathed ankles bulged out above embroidered Corean shoes. On either side stood two rat-eyed, watchful eunuchs in pale blue robes, their dark faces scowling and their hands hidden in the folds of huge sleeves.

To the right of the King the crown prince leaned against a table, a half-witted, open-mouthed youth, attired like his father, save that his mantle was purple. General Yé, the commander-in-chief of the army, stood on the left of the crown prince, velvet-eyed, green-clad, a mighty jewelled sword gleaming at his side.

The courtiers were spread out on the stage in a half circle like a many-colored fan. The ceiling of carved rafters overhead was a confused whirl of colors. The walls were latticed and panelled with translucent native paper.

Three slow bows and a pause. The twenty-eighth king of Corea was about to undergo the ordeal of a newspaper interview, an experience undreamed of by his predecessors. The interpreter folded his hands across the emboid-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ered storks on his bosom, bent his head reverently, and advanced.

"I am glad to receive a representative of the American press," whispered the King in the ear of the bowed interpreter, who whispered the words to me without daring to move his head. "It is my wish and the wish of my people that Corea shall be absolutely free and independent. I appeal now and I shall continue to appeal to the civilized nations of the world to assist in preserving the integrity of my kingdom. I especially rely upon the United States. The American government was the first to make a treaty with Corea, and that treaty contains a promise of help in time of danger. I look to the United States for a fulfilment of that promise. My faith in your country is unshaken. When other nations threaten me, I turn to America."

"But how can the United States help you now?" I asked.

The King looked embarrassed, and his whispering grew fainter than ever. It was plain that he felt constrained in the presence of his courtiers. He hesitated, looked about him nervously, then said : —

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"If a few American soldiers were sent to the palace to protect my person, it would change the situation."

I had heard many stories concerning the pressure put upon the King by the Japanese — that he was continually under duress; that a sword was drawn upon him before he signed the treaty making Corea a military ally of Japan; that he was kept in a constant state of terror by a reduction of the palace guard to a handful of untrained, half-armed louts; and that he was unable to sleep at night for fear of sudden attempts upon his life. But this was the first time that the King had publicly avowed that he was practically a prisoner in his own capital. The rest of the interview related to matters that were interesting at that time but are hardly worth setting down here.

While the King was speaking, I could see a pair of glittering black eyes peering through an opening in the screen. Behind the screen stood the famous Queen whose ashes were soon to be scattered over her own garden. It was this extraordinary woman, who, when disguised and flying for safety in 1884, unveiled her

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

bosom to deceive her foes, crying, “See! would the Queen of Corea do that? Would she not die first?” All through the interview the Queen watched us from her place of concealment. She never allowed her royal husband out of her sight in those days of peril, fearing that the dread Tai Won Kung—the former regent—intended to destroy the King and put his grandson, General Yé, on the throne.

As I retired from the presence of the King, General Yé came forward leaning on the shoulders of his jewelled attendants—a stalwart, bright-looking young man with the bearing of a European gentleman.

The interpreter gravely informed me that the general desired me to know that he had arrived, which I knew by the fact that he was standing within ten inches of me. He said that the general hoped that my health was very good. Then he remarked that the general wished to inform me that he was going, which I suspected from the circumstance that the general had already turned his back upon me and was walking away.

Then to the Tai Won Kung, the mightiest

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

figure in modern Corean history. We walked on through the little lane which brought us to the King, passed through a sentinelled gate, and beheld the dwelling of the real ruler of Corea, a low building with a gray-tiled roof and broad veranda, reached by terraced flights of stone steps. The old hero stood on the threshold. He shook hands with me like an American politician. In spite of his seventy-eight years, his voice was trumpet-like. His laugh was a roar, accompanied by a convulsion of his whole body.

"We are ready to open Corea to the world," he said, as he ordered tea to be set before us. "The country can no longer be kept sealed to foreigners. But this change is too sudden. Corea is a peculiar country. For thousands of years our people have clung to their usages. The customs of ages cannot be given up in a day. The surrender to Western civilization must be gradual. That is the way of old Asia."

As the laughing giant sprawled back in his chair and joked with us over the fragrant tea, it was hard to believe that, thirty years before, he

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

had beheaded hundreds of innocent Christians to gratify his hatred of the "Western barbarians," and had ordered wholesale butcheries of his own countrymen, because they had dared to champion the cause of modern civilization.

Poor, dreaming Corea! Some day the American syndicates will get hold of her, and her crimes against common sense will be expiated.

---

The King of Corea is now an Emperor. Already the clang of the electric trolley car and the clamor of the gold miner are heard in his dominions. Steam railways and cotton mills are to be built. The protection sought for by the Emperor has been found, not in American bayonets, but in jealous American capital. The sober, foolish hermits listen to the footsteps of approaching Western civilization with an unformed sense of terror, for the gods of eternal calm cannot live with the god of the useful.

## CHAPTER IV

### *A Ride with the Japanese Invaders in Manchuria*

AFTER sweeping the armed Chinese hordes from Corea, the Emperor of Japan sent twenty-three thousand of his brave little men to conquer China—a rich and venerable empire of four hundred million inhabitants—and they did it.

The steamer that carried General Hasagawa and his brigade of Kumomoto troops, to join the army of invasion on the Manchurian coast afforded endless entertainment to Frederic Villiers and me. The queer war dances and singing processions of the Japanese soldiers kept the British war artist busy at his sketch-book. Yet there was an inexpressible sense of order and neatness in all parts of the crowded troop ship, a feeling of law and obedience that surpassed anything I have seen on an American or European transport.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

When we reached the coast of Manchuria, a bleak stretch of uninteresting shore, backed by treeless hills and dotted here and there with tile-roofed farmhouses, the whole Japanese force—men, horses, ammunition, food, and cannons—was carried to the land in little flat skiffs. It was a marvellous feat.

But the most extraordinary thing about our landing was the appearance of hundreds of smiling, tall Manchurians, who waded out in the shallow sea and helped to pull the boats of the invaders ashore. It was not fear that induced the pig-tailed giants to assist in the invasion of their soil, but a mere absence of national sentiment. We saw abundant signs of this spirit of indifference afterward, and that day the Japanese laughed heartily at the lack of patriotism in Manchuria, and predicted the swift collapse of China.

“We will take the Emperor from Peking in chains within three months,” said one of Hasagawa’s colonels as he rode through the mud on the shoulders of a cheerful native, playfully tickling the fellow’s thighs with his spurs.

All along the coast could be seen the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

steamers from which the main Japanese army, commanded by Field-marshall Count Oyama, had just landed, and the great fleet of warships which had convoyed the invaders across the Yellow Sea.

We were now in the Liatong peninsula, the ancient home of the once dreaded hosts of Manchurian horsemen, who imposed their own pigtail on the Chinese as a sign of conquest.

As the field-marshall had moved on to attack the walled city of Kinchow and the seven great forts of Talien-wan, which lay between us and Port Arthur, the mightiest fortress in Asia, we were bound to follow at once and overtake him before the fighting began.

Mounted on little ponies, borrowed from a Japanese officer, Mr. Villiers and I rode along the track of the advancing army, leaving our interpreters and baggage to catch up with us in any way they could.

All day we moved through a desolate country, almost barren of trees, with now and then a few acres of rice or corn or millet growing in the level ground between the rocky hills — the well-built little houses and the tawdry Buddhist

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

shrines on the roadside deserted, windows and doors smashed and the small gardens trampled flat.

At night we could see the flames of burning settlements, and several times we rode through the smouldering ruins of Manchurian villages, with none to greet us but troops of starving, howling dogs, snapping at the legs of our ponies, until a revolver shot would rid us of their attentions.

The moonlight lay white on the road, so that we were able to keep our course. The camp-fires of the Japanese coolies — the unarmed laborers who accompany all Japanese armies — began to redden the way. As we hurried on we could see the tired, barefooted men, gathered around caldrons of steaming rice. Occasionally we would overtake a silent squad of soldiers pushing on towards the front.

As the night wore on and our ponies showed signs of exhaustion, Mr. Villiers decided to join a coolie camp for food and rest until the morning. I did not dare to stop. An artist might tarry on the road and gather materials for his pencil, but a correspondent, responsible for the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

news, must not halt. The field-marshall was ahead, and with him there might be rival correspondents. Who knew what might happen that very night? The clatter of my pony's hoofs seemed to intensify the loneliness of the way as I pressed on, leaving my experienced comrade to find sleep on the hard roadside. An hour later I passed a dead Manchurian peasant lying with ghastly upturned face beside the glowing ashes of a farmhouse. The country grew more desolate. The moon sank. It was hard to find the way. Again and again I had to dismount and, with my bull's-eye lantern, seek out the trampled track of the army. Once in a while I could hear the faint clink-clank of the Japanese soldiers working somewhere near the road on the field telegraph line. Presently a mounted Japanese courier dashed by me in the darkness, shouting something I could not understand.

Now there was no sign of life anywhere, no friendly light, and no sound but the beating of my tired animal's feet. My pony began to stumble. Twice I lost the road. There was danger that I had ridden too far and was on

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

hostile ground. The darkness prevented me from seeing the surrounding country. I dismounted and examined the road with my lantern. There was not a trace of the army to be seen. My heart sank. What with hunger and the fatigue of my terrible ride, I was ready to sink to the ground. I tried to mount my pony again, but the poor beast went on his knees.

At that moment I heard the harsh challenge of a Japanese sentry, and with an answering cry of "Nippon!" ("Japan!") I ran forward to find myself on the outmost picket line of Oyama's escort. Presently an officer appeared, and I explained in French that I was in search of the field-marshall. He told me that I had ridden two miles beyond the headquarters, and sent a soldier to lead my horse as I retraced my way.

When I reached the farmhouse where the field-marshall slept, I was glad to crawl under a blanket between two hospitable staff officers lying on a wooden couch. They sleepily informed me that nothing important had happened, but that the advance brigade, which

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

was ahead of us, would attack the walls of Kinchow the next day. Thank God! I was not too late. In a minute I was fast asleep.

Daybreak found us in the saddle, with the fat Japanese field-marshall, a good-natured, kindly old politician, riding at the head of his staff. As we moved forward, a courier arrived from the front with news that the advance guard was in sight of Kinchow. We spurred our horses and pressed on with all possible speed. At noon we halted under a huge pine tree and lunched with the field-marshall, who passed about a tin pail of dried peas roasted over a fire. Each man took a handful of peas and crunched them under his teeth.

"It is all we have," said Count Oyama, laughingly, "but eat heartily, gentlemen; if we capture Kinchow, we shall fare better to-night."

A sudden sound of heavy cannon firing in the distance interrupted the frugal meal. The fight at Kinchow had begun. Every man leaped to his saddle, and off we went at a gallop. But, alas, when we reached the scene of the battle, Kinchow had been taken. The little walled city founded by Manchurian war-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

riors three hundred years before had been abandoned after an artillery duel of an hour, and we rode through the dynamite-shattered city gate to see the pavements stained with the blood of a few women, children, and old men, accidentally killed by shell fire, and the terrified inhabitants kowtowing on their knees to their conquerors.

We passed right through the city, and in the plain beyond we found the reserves of General Yamaji's division. The famous one-eyed division commander—the most terrible personality and the best fighter in the Japanese army—had ordered Noghi's and Nishi's brigades to attack the seven immense forts surrounding Taliен Bay, six miles from Kinchow,—mighty masses of masonry, carrying forty- and fifty-ton Krupp rifles and protected by earthworks, descending at some points almost perpendicularly into the sea from a height of three hundred feet. These works were a triumph of German engineering and military science — massive, impenetrable, connected at all angles by telephones, and guarded against naval attacks by a harbor thickly strewn with torpedoes.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Here the Japanese generals expected to find a strong Chinese force, and they were prepared to lose thousands of men in the battle.

There were three positions to be attacked. On the left of the bay was Fort Jokasan, with five five-inch rifles commanding the water; and a mighty redoubt, with three-inch Krupp field pieces covering the land approach. To the right of the bay, on the hills, were three large forts,—Seidaisan, Cosan, and Lo-Orrian. The first two were armed with six- and seven-inch Krupp guns, and the third with six- and eight-inch Creusot guns. Stretching out in the middle of the bay was a tongue of rocky country ending in a high hill, on which were built the three powerful Oshozima forts, defended by six- and seven-inch Krupp guns.

A thrill of expectant fear ran through the army as the great guns of Jokasan were turned upon the advancing Japanese regiment on the left of our line. For two hours the hills shook with the shock of the battery. All the other guns in the chain of forts surrounding the harbor were sending shells wildly about the country. The regiment attacking Jokasan advanced

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

at a double-quick. Then it charged. The Japanese first reached three large intrenched earthworks, from which came a sputtering musketry fire. Two or three quick volleys were fired, and a few Chinese soldiers were seen dashing away from the earthworks, stripping off their uniforms as they ran.

Suddenly the guns of Jokasan were silent. The Japanese fixed bayonets and made a charge up the huge mass of masonry and earthworks, only to find the stronghold absolutely vacant. The gunners had crossed the bay in small boats, and the rest of the garrison had sneaked away along the shore. The great fort with its magnificent guns and enormous stores of ammunition had been surrendered almost without a blow. It was an astounding situation — so inexplicable that General Yamaji suspected a masked movement. But that ended the battle for the night.

I slept that night in a Kinchow shop, lying down in the darkness on a soft wreck of merchandise, and when I awoke at daybreak I found myself stretched out on heaps of embroidered silks, with mandarins' hats and boots and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

wonderful jackets and glittering ornaments scattered about in brilliant confusion, my pillow being a painted wooden monster without a head. It was like fairyland to awaken in such a scene of shimmering splendor. But I must confess that the most glorious thing in that room was a plain tin of Chicago corned beef. Such is the coarse nature of a war correspondent after a forced march on dried peas and water.

All night Noghi's brigade had waited at the approach to the three Oshozima forts. Here great slaughter was expected. When there was light enough to move, the advance began across a wrinkled, stony valley. A terrific sound of gongs and drums was heard in the forts, and the brigade halted for a few minutes. The fact was that the Chinese had abandoned Oshozima during the night. They had sent back forty or fifty soldiers to secure the personal property of the officers. These men were surprised by the Japanese, and hoping to frighten the enemy and gain time, they were pounding the alarm apparatus in the forts. The Japanese line swept straight up the giant escarpments, but not a gun was fired. They began to realize

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

that there was no enemy before them. Here and there they could see a Chinaman skulking away.

Then the great batteries of Lo-Orisan, on the right side of the bay, began to pour shells into Oshozima. Nishi's brigade boldly advanced against the three forts. For three hours there was a deafening cannonade. We could see the shells from the Creusot rifles exploding all along the hillside. But every shell went wide of the mark. The Chinese gunners ran wildly up and down behind the ramparts of the forts. When the Japanese skirmish line got within range, and their bullets began to patter over the Chinese guns, the garrison of the fort ran down the hillsides and fled toward Port Arthur.

So the seven great modern strongholds of Talien-Wan fell into the hands of Japan. By nine o'clock in the morning all was over, and a position which two regiments might have held against a whole army was given up.

As the Japanese troops were advancing against Oshozima, I rode with General Yamaji and his staff into one of the smaller entrenched works on the plain below. A Chinese shell,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

exploding near me, wounded my horse and threw me to the ground, breaking one of my ribs and injuring my knee. In that condition I had to ride back to Kinchow. The wounds were not serious, but the bandages which the Japanese surgeons applied were fearfully impressive, and when Mr. Villiers arrived that night—after losing his horse and walking thirty miles over the hills to find me swathed like a hero—he looked absolutely envious.

The jolly old field-marshall gave the pawn-shop of Kinchow to Mr. Villiers and myself as a residence. It was an interesting place. The Chinese troops had looted the storerooms before they retired from the city, and we found furs and costly silk robes and gold and silver ornaments scattered about on the ground in the courtyard, with rare old enamelled head-dresses, chains, and chatelaines—treasures of the local aristocracy—tangled up in piles of silver bracelets.

The next day, the white-bearded, blue-clad giant who owned the place returned and knelt down to thank us for letting him sit down in his own house. We gave him a bottle of cham-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

pagne, which the field-marshall had sent to us with a pair of live chickens. The old Manchurian sniffed at the foaming wine and eyed us suspiciously. Were we trying to poison him? He raised the cup again and again to his lips, shivered and set it down without tasting. Then he swallowed the cupful and waited for the sensation. His dark eyes rolled upward and his face softened. An expression of ineffable peace came into his aged countenance. Putting the bottle to his lips, he drained it, smacked his lips, and crossed his bony hands on his stomach contentedly. His eyes brightened, his cheeks grew rosy. Death had no terrors now.

“Where do you get it?” he said to our interpreter.

“In France.”

“How far away is that country? How long does it take to get there?”

Two days later, we took a walk on top of the great wall that ran around the stricken town and saw a sight of horror.

Seven women and three little girls were dragged out of a well in an old garden, and laid

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

stiff and dripping among the faded flowers and drifting leaves. They had drowned themselves when the Japanese began to shell the place, fearing the fate that befalls women after Asiatic victories.

There they lay, entwined together in a last embrace, a silent memorial of the virtue of Manchurian women. Four were the wives of prominent men; the others were their daughters and servants.

The victorious army went rumbling on through the streets — horses, men, baggage carts, cannon — and the brilliant pageantry of the field-marshall's staff swept around the corner. But none saw the ten stark figures in the high-walled Chinese garden; none save a group of tearful men, too cowardly to fight in defence of their homes, and the two pitying war correspondents on the city wall.

Yet Kinchow was once the home of chivalry and heroism. Here the hereditary knights of Manchu reared the walls of a city three hundred years ago, and planted their banners. But in the principal temple, before the forsaken gods of Manchuria, where countless warriors

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

had sworn allegiance to their country, a Chinese soldier, in full uniform, committed suicide while the Japanese army was entering the city.

Who can explain this craven instinct in a once valorous race? It is not hard to understand how men can have political loyalty and patriotism educated out of them; but surely women, who prized their honor, and their husbands' honor, more than their lives, were worth dying for in battle.

After a few days' rest we moved on toward Port Arthur. The battery of thirty siege guns was still floundering on the roads in the rear, but Hasagawa's brigade of Kumamoto men had caught up with the field-marshall, and the whole army of invasion was assembled for the final stroke—about twenty-three thousand men, and forty-eight guns.

While Oyama's army moved forward across the rough country, the main Japanese fleet, commanded by Admiral Ito, steamed slowly along the peninsular coast, constantly exchanging communications with the field-marshall.

As the splendid columns marched through the valleys and over the hills, now wading in the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

streams, and now sprawling painfully among loose, jagged rocks, or plodding heavily in drifting sand, the wonderful discipline and endurance of the Japanese soldiery displayed itself. No flags, no music, no pomp ; a silent, businesslike organization, magnificently equipped and officered, with one common purpose uniting thousands of men — the glory of Japan.

Mr. Villiers and I had abandoned the field-marshall's headquarters and rode with General Yamaji, the one-eyed, — a coarse, reticent, sinister man, demoniac in his energy and temperament, but modest, and the finest soldier in the East. It was a hard march, with little food, and, at times, no water. When our vanguard approached the scene of the coming battle, a part of the Chinese garrison advanced out of Port Arthur and surprised a small body of Japanese cavalry scouts in the depth between the hills which adjoins the valley leading to Port Arthur. I arrived at the front just in time to see Nishi's brigade send flanking columns around the hill to cut off the Chinese.

I could see the Chinese advancing in three columns from the southwest and northwest. It

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

was a brilliant procession of flags and banners. The sound of gongs and squeaking trumpets came faintly up from the moving pageant.

Away to the left were the Japanese cavalrymen in a cloud of dust, cutting their way back on the main road through the line of tossing red-and-white standards. The brave little scouts had dismounted and were firing carbine volleys, while a few squads of Japanese infantrymen were creeping to the rescue and keeping up a brisk peppering. There were at least fifteen hundred Chinamen in the three columns.

Suddenly the enemy caught sight of our rapid flank movement and fled. I rode down the main road and joined the scouts as the Chinese force disappeared through the hills. The Japanese had lost eight men in the fight, and forty-two were wounded. The Japanese dead lay on the roadside, headless and mutilated. Several bodies were without hands; two had been butchered like sheep. It was this mutilation of their dead which the Japanese afterward cited as a partial justification of the slaughter of unarmed men at Port Arthur.

Accompanied by the correspondent of the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

*London Times*, I rode the next day with a reconnoitring party into the wide valley that leads to Port Arthur. We left our main escort concealed behind a grove of trees, and moved cautiously toward the distant cannon-crowned hills, the little group of Japanese officers carrying their revolvers in their hands. A lieutenant and sergeant rode ahead. Just as we came to a rising in the ground there was a sudden blaze of rifle fire and the lieutenant dashed back alone. The Chinese pickets had wounded and captured the sergeant. We afterward heard that the poor fellow was crucified alive in Port Arthur.

"Run for your lives!" shrieked the colonel commanding our party, as he dug the spurs into his horse.

We retreated to a grassy knoll and watched the Chinese sharpshooters creeping here and there in an attempt to surround us. But they were too cowardly to close in. Presently we saw a cloud of dust sweeping down through the head of the valley from which we came, and in a few minutes a battalion of Japanese infantry came to our rescue, Mr. Villiers, my gallant camp comrade, riding in front.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

A line of Japanese skirmishers drove the enemy back to a slope in front of Port Arthur, where we could see them waving their gorgeous banners and dragging a field-gun into position.

Towering upon the hills behind and to the left of them was a multitude of forts, but not a cannon was fired. The hilltops on the west side of the valley were dotted with Chinese sentinels, while squads of watchful Japanese soldiers were grouped on the opposite heights. Horsemen were scouring the ravines and roads in all directions, to guard against a surprise. There was a touch of Indian fighting in the scene.

## CHAPTER V

### *Battle and Massacre of Port Arthur*

ALL was ready for the battle of Port Arthur, and the Japanese army was already moving through the night into position for an attack upon the sixteen great modern forts at daybreak.

The little group of saddle-weary foreign correspondents stood around a heap of blazing wood while their horses were being fed by the excited coolies. The wide valley flamed and roared with the camp-fires of the invading host, and thousands of dust-covered coolies moved in the darkness with the ammunition and food. I anxiously watched a small man pacing slowly before a smouldering fire around which were gathered a few whispering staff-officers. His head was bowed, and his hands were locked behind his back as he moved. It was General Yamaji, the terrible little division commander — he who deliberately plucked out his own eye

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

at school to show his comrades that he was not a coward. Our fate depended upon this man, for he was the real general of the attacking forces, the stout old field-marshall being a political rather than a military element in the situation.

Yamaji turned away from the fire, and with a surly nod of the head to his officers mounted his horse. The staff followed his example. I swung myself into the saddle and joined the general as he pushed forward with the right wing of the army across the head of the valley and around the face of the western hills, in preparation for the turning movement which was to be the key of the battle.

We were carried along in the darkness with a horrible sense of universal motion, on the edges of giant earth seams and steep precipices, with the artillery clanging and grinding, and the ponderous siege batteries groaning over the loose stones in the dry river beds; horses plunging and stumbling, with mountain guns strapped on their backs; the swift clatter of the cavalry sweeping backward and forward with news of the enemy, the steady tramp and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

murmur of the infantry ; the crawling lines of coolies attending the fighting men ; now and then a horse and rider rolling down over the rocks ; frightened steeds shying at camp-fires ; a procession of ammunition boxes carried along like black coffins ; occasionally a glimpse of a ravine with rivers of bayonets gleaming at the bottom of it ; anxious and hungry skirmishers creeping on their bellies along the ridges of the distant peaks — and yet, a curious hush over it all — the sense of a secret to be kept.

Not a sign of a flag, the roll of a drum, nor the note of a bugle ; nothing but the rush of human feet, the beat of hoofs, the crunching of wheels, and the clank of cold steel.

It made a man grow cold to be near Yamaji and see the gleam in that one eye. There were sounds of voices around him as the swift messengers came and went in the gloom, but it was a strange babble of Asiatic accents, falling weirdly upon the ears of a New York newspaper writer, borne along atomlike in that human torrent.

If ever a man can realize the insignificance of the individual compared with the force of organ-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ized society, if ever there can be borne in upon his understanding the fact that his true measure in the world is the five or six feet that span the length of his grave, if ever he can be overwhelmed by a sense of loneliness in the midst of a multitude, it should be in such a scene as this.

Mile after mile we rode in the dark, through valleys and over hills; hour after hour the eager troops moved with us, and just as the faint, cold light appeared in the eastern sky, we reached the head of the right wing of the army, where Yamaji dismounted and was greeted by Noghi.

We climbed to the top of a rocky peak, and saw before us, on a hill, Isuyama, the triple fort which was the key of the fight. It was an oblong quadrangle, with high, thick earthen walls, connected by a strong shelter wall with a still larger and stronger square fort on higher ground, above which ran another wall to a great round redoubt commanding the valley and town of Port Arthur.

Shut in by hills on all sides, we could see nothing but the triple fort with its lines of gay flags, for we had made a detour of eight

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

miles in order to surprise the Chinese by a western attack, instead of advancing straight down the valley. To the left were our mountain batteries, stealthily planted on a ridge the day before.

Below and in front of us was a dark line of Japanese infantry kneeling in a ploughed field, waiting for light enough to storm Isuyama, and in the gully to our right was another battalion of bayonets ready for the signal. Thousands of men were massed in the rear.

Everything was silent and motionless in the dawning light. Yamaji lifted his cap and made a signal. The Japanese mountain batteries began to play upon Isuyama and the kneeling line in the field below us fired volley after volley at the tops of the rough, brown walls.

Instantly the battlements were crowded with warriors in red, yellow, blue, and green, and the guns of the triple fort seemed to cover the hillside with flame and smoke. The Chinese had five-inch Krupp rifles, and nine-inch mortars with auxiliary batteries of revolving and quick-firing guns.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Shells began to drop from all sides. Even the great sea forts, with their mighty twelve-inch rifles, and all the forts along the valley of Port Arthur, aimed over the hills at us; for Isuyama was the key and, once it should fall, the whole left flank of the Chinese would be exposed. The taking of the triple fort was to be a signal to the rest of the Japanese forces. We could not see the giant forts in the distance, but we could hear the screaming of their shells overhead.

As the Chinese batteries splintered the hillside and sent clouds of earth up out of the ploughed ground, the Japanese line kneeling at the base of the slope in front of Isuyama stood up and advanced in the teeth of the guns, firing continuously as they went. The shock of the cannon explosions made the banners on the walls of the three forts dance. The Chinese stuck to their guns. On, on, pressed the slender, dark line, with trails of fire and smoke running up and down the ranks. The Japanese soldiers moved as precisely as though they were on parade. Then the battalion waiting in the ravine moved forward

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

in column formation on the right, to attack the side of the nearest fort. As the thin skirmish line reached the steep scarp in front of the thundering walls, it suddenly swung around and joined the column on the right, and the united battalions, with fixed bayonets, rushed up the steep slope toward the side wall, while the Chinese shells tore gaps in their ranks.

By this time a mountain battery had been carried up on the dizzy ridge where Yamaji stood, the soldiers pressing their bodies against the horses to keep them from slipping; and five minutes afterward six guns were dropping shells inside of the first fort. The Chinese gunners leaped backward from their batteries.

With a ringing yell the Japanese dashed up to the fort and scaled the ramparts by sticking bayonets in the earthwork, shooting and bayoneting the garrison, and chasing the enemy along the connecting walls.

A cheer went up from the hills and valleys as the victorious troops pushed on into the second fort, and finally captured the great redoubt on top of the hill, while the fugitive

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Chinese scrambled down into the valley on the other side.

Once in the redoubt the whole battlefield lay stretched before us, with its miles of rolling smoke and roaring guns. At the head of the valley was the comfortable old field-marshall and the reserve centre, with its crashing field-guns and siege battery. We were on the right of the main valley. On the left of the valley, just opposite to our position, were seven strong Chinese forts. The three looking north were the Shoju forts, while the four facing westward were the Nerio or "Two Dragon" forts. At the foot of the valley was the town of Port Arthur, spread about the enclosed harbor and, beyond it, towering up on the sea ridge, were six immense modern forts, powerful masses of masonry, standing alone on separate hill-tops, shielded by mighty earthworks, and armed with the heaviest and newest rifles and mortars. No fleet in the world would have dared to attack such a position from the sea. One of these sea forts was Ogunsan. It stood four hundred and fifty feet above the town. To the east of it were the Lo-Leshi

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

forts. The other three sea forts were on a tiny peninsula to the west of the harbor, and were known as the Manjuyama forts. Hasagawa's brigade had moved along the seacoast and was attacking the Shoju and Nerio forts on their eastern sides and harassing the Lo-Leshi forts on the coast.

When we entered the redoubt overlooking this vast scene of conflict, Yamaji's officers tore the white canvas side from a Chinese tent, and, cutting a disk from a red Chinese banner, made a rude Japanese flag and hoisted it on a Manchurian lance. The signal of victory could be seen from every fort. Instantly the redoubt became an artillery target. The ground about it was shaken by the explosion of shells. The air was filled with screaming sounds as great projectiles from the sea forts passed overhead.

But Yamaji stood out on the wall of the redoubt in plain sight, as silent and unmoved as a carved image, while showers of shattered rock and earth fell about him. It was a face to study—cold, stoical, Asiatic. The battle seemed to bore him; it was too easy. There

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

was not enough bloodshed. His one eye searched the scene like the eye of a machine. Once he smiled and showed his yellow teeth—a ghastly smile.

Yet only a few days before I saw Yamaji release the little singing birds found in the Taliens-Wan forts lest they might starve in their cages—so strangely is mercy and cruelty compounded in the human heart.

The Japanese field and siege guns were pounding away at the seven forts on the other side of the valley, and Yamaji's mountain batteries joined them. It was a colossal duel of war enginerry. Through the great arches of fire and smoke came shrieking shells and the close confidential hum of rifle bullets at one's ear—those invisible messengers of death which seem to speak to each man separately.

The arsenal in Port Arthur had caught fire and was ripping, roaring, and rattling, vomiting flame and smoke like a volcano, as half an acre of massed shells and cartridges exploded. Miles and miles of red and white banners fluttered on the Chinese walls stretched between the seven forts on the opposite ridge.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

We could see the Manchurian warriors rushing along these walls, and hear the din of their gongs and trumpets. Two or three Chinese battalions with enormous flags were stationed on the lower hills, out of reach of the Japanese artillery fire, and in a position to resist Yamaji, should he cross the valley. The Shojū and Nerio forts were the prey of Hasagawa, who charged up from the eastern valley, taking advantage of earth seams and irregularities in the ground. Two torpedo mines were exploded in front of his lines, but the Chinese touched the keys too soon. All over the valley were sunken mines connected by wires with the walled camps and forts, but somehow the enemy failed to use them.

Just as the front rank of Hasagawa's brigade was dashing up to the Shojū forts, a Japanese shell set one of them on fire, and with a roar and shock that stopped the battle for a moment, the shells for the heavy guns, piled on the floor of the fort, exploded. The Chinese garrison fled over the ridges, and Hasagawa's men came sweeping around the rough hill to find the fort a mass of flames, heaving and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

reeling as the fire reached additional stores of shells. That ended all hope of defending the seven forts. The Chinese abandoned one fort after the other, and retreated. Hasagawa was in possession of the Shojū and Nerio hills.

But the most dramatic scene in the battle was yet to come. After taking Isuyama, Yamaji's infantry had clambered down the precipitous face of the bluff into the valley, and, having driven the Chinese out of a fortified barrack, were huddled behind the huge structure. Beyond this lay the smooth naval parade-ground of Port Arthur, and on the other side of it, a shallow stream with a long, narrow, wooden bridge on stilts. At the other end of the bridge were rifle-pits filled with Chinese infantry, defending a road leading into the town between two small hills, on which were three field-guns manned by the only good gunners on the Chinese side.

Hasagawa had captured one side of the valley. Yamaji was in possession of the other side. The town of Port Arthur had yet to be taken. Yamaji was nervous and jealous.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

It was plain that unless his troops moved quickly, Hasagawa, the only general outside of his division, might have the honor of taking the town itself and the colossal Ogunsan fort, the monarch of the coast.

Every time Yamaji's men attempted to move away from the cover of the barrack walls the Chinese riflemen in the pits beyond the bridge swept the smooth parade-ground with steady volleys from Winchester repeating rifles. Again and again the Japanese started out, only to retreat before the hail of bullets.

Yamaji ground his teeth. His face was livid with rage. In vain his staff officers shouted from the redoubt to the troops below to make a charge across the bridge. In vain the general made fierce gestures. The Japanese had struck good Chinese fighting men for the first time since Tatsumi's troops stormed the north-west heights of Ping Yang.

The little battery on the hill, commanding the bridge and the road to the town, was barking and playing the mischief with the Japanese sharpshooters on the walls of the barracks. Occasionally the great guns of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Ogunsan spoke, but the shells went far and wide. The shrill rattle of distant musketry could be heard over the hills where Hasagawa's men were slaughtering the retreating garrisons of the seven forts. Thousands of the enemy were trying to escape eastward. Troops of plumed Manchurians on white horses swept away through the ravines.

From the torn ramparts of the redoubt we could see a line of eight or nine Japanese warships stretched parallel with the coast, with columns of spray jetting up from the badly aimed shells of the sea forts. Torpedo boats darted about the entrance of the harbor, firing upon junks loaded with fugitive inhabitants.

Yamaji stood twitching his hands murderously, and glaring through his one eye at the regiment skulking behind the barrack below. No words can describe the fury of that fearful countenance.

The Japanese army had actually been halted by Chinamen at the threshold of Port Arthur! A half-mile more and the Chinese Empire would be conquered!

The crouching regiment suddenly sent out

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

skirmish lines to the right and left, and these, gaining the shelter of low walls on the edges of the drill-ground, delivered a hot fire into the flanks of the Chinese rifle-pits. A battalion knelt in a semicircle on a plateau in the rear of the barrack and sent volley after volley against the stubborn defenders of the road.

Under the cover of this fire a small column dashed over the bullet-swept space, crossed the bridge, drove the Chinese sharpshooters out of their intrenchments, and seized the battery on the hill behind. At the same time the field-marshall ordered the reserve centre to move down the valley from the village of Suishiye, and thousands of men came rushing along the roads behind the troops already pressing into the doomed town.

At this point I left Yamaji, and climbing down the face of the bluff into the valley, made my way across the drill-ground and the bridge to the top of a hill on the edge of the town. Here I found the British and American military attachés. We watched the vanguard of Japan as it entered Port Arthur, firing volleys through the town as it advanced.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Not a shot was fired in reply. Even Ogun-san was silent and deserted. The Chinese garrison had escaped. The frightened inhabitants cowered in the streets.

Then began the meaningless and unnecessary massacre which horrified the civilized world and robbed the Japanese victory of its dignity. Up to that time there was not a stain on the Japanese flag.

As the triumphant troops poured into Port Arthur they saw the heads of their slain comrades hanging by cords, with the noses and ears shorn off. There was a rude arch at the entrance to the town decorated with these bloody trophies. It may have been this sight which roused the blood of the conquerors, and banished humanity and mercy from their hearts; or it may have been mere lust of slaughter—the world can judge for itself. But the Japanese killed everything they saw.

Unarmed men, kneeling in the streets and begging for life, were shot, bayoneted, or beheaded. The town was sacked from end to end, and the inhabitants were butchered in their own houses.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

A procession of ponies, donkeys, and camels went out of the western side of Port Arthur with swarms of terrified men and children. The fugitives waded across a shallow inlet, shivering and stumbling in the icy water. A company of infantry was drawn up at the head of the inlet, and poured steady volleys at the dripping victims; but not a bullet hit its mark.

The last to cross the inlet were two men. One of them led two small children. As they staggered out on the opposite shore a squadron of cavalry rode up and cut down one of the men. The other man and the children retreated into the water and were shot like dogs.

All along the streets we could see the pleading storekeepers shot and sabred. Doors were broken down and windows torn out.

The sound of music — the first we had heard since the invasion began — drew us back to the drill-ground, where all the Japanese generals were assembled to congratulate the field-marshall — all save Noghi, who was pursuing the enemy among the hills. What cheering and handshaking! What solemn strains from the band! And all the while we could hear the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

rattle of volleys in the streets of Port Arthur, and knew that the helpless people were being slain in cold blood, and their homes pillaged.

That was the coldest night we had known. The thermometer suddenly went down to twenty degrees above zero. I found my way up the valley to Suishiye, although I was so tired that I twice had to lie down on the roadside. There was nothing to eat in the little house where I slept, but the field-marshall sent me a bottle of Burgundy. For two weeks I had not taken my boots off.

In the morning I walked into Port Arthur with the correspondent of the *London Times*. The scenes in the streets were heartrending. Everywhere we saw bodies torn and mangled, as if by wild beasts. Dogs were whimpering over the frozen corpses of their masters. The victims were mostly shopkeepers. Nowhere the trace of a weapon, nowhere a sign of resistance. It was a sight that would damn the fairest nation on earth.

There was one trembling old woman, and only one, in that great scene of carnage, her wrinkled face quivering with fear, and her



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

limbs trembling as she wandered among the slain. Where was she to go? What was she to do? All the men were killed, all the women were off in the frozen hills, and yet not an eye of pity was turned upon her, but she was jostled and laughed at until she turned down a blood-stained alley, to see God knows what new horror.

Port Arthur was a rambling town of small dwellings and shops which grew up about the great modern Chinese naval depot, with its wonderful dry-dock, the largest in Asia.

When Oyama advanced from Kinchow, his chief of staff, Major Cameo, sent a captured spy into Port Arthur with the following letter addressed to General Ju, the Chinese commander who fled with his army from Taliens-Wan:—

“TO HIS EXCELLENCY, GENERAL JU:—

“I am familiar with your great reputation, but I am sorry I have never met you. For many years I was military attaché at Peking, and I thought to make your acquaintance. I regret that I must now meet you in the field.

“Our army has taken Kinchow, and I learn

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

that your Excellency, being unable to defend that city, retreated to Port Arthur. But this is not your fault — rather the fortune of war.

“The soldiers you command are all newly recruited, and their number is small. On the other hand, our troops have had many years of thorough training, and are brave in battle. They are not to be compared to yours. Our numbers are also superior to yours. We have about fifty thousand men.

“We are about to march on Port Arthur. It is not necessary to predict the result, or say which side will have the victory. Your troops were defeated in the first battle at Asan. They were also vanquished for a second time at Ping Yang, and for a third time at the Yalu River. Your forces were also defeated on the sea. Indeed, you have not had a victory.

“This being the case, the will of Heaven seems to be plain. Your Excellency no doubt intends to defend Port Arthur, but it will be useless to attempt it. Our army is fighting for humanity and right, and if any resist us, they will be destroyed; but if any one throws away his weapon, he will be treated kindly, and according to his rank.

“Will your Excellency believe my word and surrender to us? This is not only the happiest

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

course for your Excellency personally, but the best and wisest course for your nation.

“Notwithstanding the fact that I have not made your acquaintance, I take the liberty of letting your Excellency know the facts.

“CAMEO.

“Nov. 15, 1894.”

It is not necessary to describe in detail the pitiless murder of two thousand unarmed inhabitants of Port Arthur which gave the lie to this official promise of Japan. Whatever I may have written of that three days' slaughter at a time when Japan was seeking admission to the family of civilized nations, it is only just to say that the massacre at Port Arthur was the only lapse of the Japanese from the usages of humane warfare. A witness for civilization, I could not remain silent in the presence of such a crime. The humanity and self-control of the Japanese soldiery during the historic march of the allied nations to Peking, seven years later, — notwithstanding the cruelty and barbarism of some of the European troops, — have redeemed Japan in the eyes of history. The Japanese have demonstrated to the world that their civilization is substantial.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

But even in the delirium of Port Arthur, not a Chinese woman was harmed—yes, one,—but she was killed by a volley directed against men. Women were fired at as they fled when the troops entered the town, but it was impossible to distinguish men from women in that flying rabble.

---

After crossing the Yellow Sea to Japan, and sending the story of Port Arthur to the *New York World*—whose war correspondent I was—I went to Tokio to attend the national celebration of the Japanese victories. The scene in Uyeno Park was one of strange and never-to-be-forgotten beauty. It was said that four hundred thousand persons were gathered together in that great festival.

Fantastic maskers danced under the shadows of gnarled and twisted pines; thrilling sounds of singing filled the air, and from a thick grove came the long, sweet booming of a hidden bell.

Old Japan, with her top-knotted men and her child-women—graceful, poetic, innocent Japan—rustled and glided about in waves of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

color and life; and high above the heads of the joyous multitudes were the mimic heads of Chinamen swinging from poles—ghastly reminders of the scenes I had left behind me.

The crown prince was there, and the nobles of Japan, and as the vast processions moved along they sang the new ode written by the Japanese poet, Fukushi: —

Flag of the morning sun;

Flag of the morning sun;

Across the rolling waves of the ocean to a far distant land.  
Confronted by the Imperial intelligence of our great lord,  
by the invincible hosts of our warriors,—who can hope  
to conquer?

*Refrain:*

Teikoku banzai! banbanzai!

Flag of the morning sun;

Flag of the morning sun;

By thy favor we have multiplied the glory of our land;  
we have pressed forward with speed.

The strongholds of the enemy have fallen continuously;  
the ships of the enemy have been ground to powder.

The war has been victory upon victory.

*Refrain:*

Teikoku banzai! banbanzai!

Flag of the morning sun;

Flag of the morning sun;

To our sunland there is no parallel in the world.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

We have but one spirit of loyalty. Even to boys and maidens, if for thy [the Emperor's] sake, we are ready to die; for the sake of our country we grudge not our bodies.

O Mountain Cherry ! send out thy perfume in the morning sun.

*Refrain :*

Teikoku banzai ! banbanzai !

---

In considering the astonishing result of the war between Japan and China, it is important to remember that the most decisive elements in the struggle were the presence of a passionate national sentiment on the one side, and the almost complete absence of patriotism on the other side. This alone explains what is otherwise inexplicable. The Chinese were well armed, and were fighting on their own soil behind great fortresses equipped with every death-dealing device of modern military science. But they were devoid of that pride of country, that fierce love of national glory, which thrilled the Japanese soldiery. So far as the Chinese were concerned, their flag represented a mere abstraction, a distant, invisible, almost unthinkable authority, having no direct

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

relationship to the individual, and manifesting itself in an endless system of squeezing, through the doddering old mandarins and their brutal retainers. To die for such a flag seemed as foolish as the tears of Mark Twain at the grave of Adam. The proclamation of the Chinese Emperor, issued at the most critical stage of the struggle, called upon the inhabitants of Manchuria to resist the invaders—not because their own manhood and honor would be stained by the conquest of their soil, not because their homes were threatened, not because they were to be enslaved by a foreign government, but for the reason that the tombs of the Emperor's ancestors at Moukden were in danger of desecration.

To the Japanese soldier, the flag of Japan stood for his own honor. His patriotism was simply an extension of his personal pride. Deep in his heart was the feeling that he who served Japan best, served God and the world best. It was that sentiment, that conviction, which developed the soldier spirit.

No man who has seen the two races in the field can doubt that the Chinese and Japanese

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

are equally contemptuous of death. They are all fatalists. But the cold, passionless, abstruse Chinese system of civilization, the mysticism surrounding the throne, the remoteness of the imperial person from all understandable human connection with its subjects, has gradually denationalized China, and robbed the Chinese of any personal inspiration to shed their blood for the sake of their soil.

Since the battles of Port Arthur and Wei-Hai-Wei, the "Boxer movement" has called the attention of statesmen to the fact that a national sentiment is springing up in China, not because of the imperial government, but in spite of it.

And it may be that after the Chinese have learned to love China well enough to fight for her, they may love her enough to purge her of cruelty, and corruption, and idle scholastic vanity—love her enough to want to see her honored among the nations for her humanity and usefulness.

## CHAPTER VI

### *The Avatar of Count Tolstoy*

WHILE I was investigating the persecution of the Jews in Russia for the *New York Herald*, and trying to keep the Emperor's busy police from penetrating the secret of my mission, a letter from James Gordon Bennett directed me to find Count Tolstoy, and learn whether his real views of modern marriage were presented in "The Kreutzer Sonata," the extraordinary book which was then attracting attention throughout the civilized world.

A few hours' railway journey from St. Petersburg to Tula, and a dashing ride in a three-horse sleigh, through a snowstorm, brought me to Yasnia Poliana, the little village in the heart of European Russia, where the great novelist

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

dwell with his wife and children, among the rough peasants.

Altogether a strong face. A massive, wrinkled brow; blue-gray eyes, able to see the inside and outside of a man at once; a powerful, flat-nostirred nose, jutting between high cheek bones; a mouth made for pity; a vast gray beard; a giant body clad in a coarse peasant's dress, gathered in at the waist under a stout leather belt; feet shod in shoes made by the brown, sinewy hands of the wearer.

Such was Count Lyoff Tolstoy, the god of Russian literature, as I found him in the savagely bare house where his greatest novels were written.

It was all so strange,—and it was stranger still to an American writer, fresh from hard-headed London, Paris, and New York,—to sit with the great master in this house, whose doors were never closed to the hungry or weary, whose table was always spread, whose owner called every wandering pilgrim a brother.

That night, as I lay in the Count's little iron cot, among his books, I heard the clock strike twelve, and it would not have surprised me if

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the clock had struck thirteen, so unusual were the ways of that wonderful place.

At the rough little table on which “War and Peace” and “Anna Karénina” were penned, I sat for hours with Count Tolstoy, struggling against the force of his sweeping condemnations of marriage as it is and not as it ought to be. And then I came to know how the husband of a high-souled, loving woman and the father of thirteen children came to write that awful protest against married life in the nineteenth century.

When the wild Count was married, nearly thirty years before, his wife was a mere child. It was this young girl—a slender beauty of good family and fine breeding—who for years strangled the cynicism that lurked in the novelist’s ink bottle. When he was writing “War and Peace” she read his manuscript, page by page, and pleaded with him to strike bitter and fierce things out of his work, so that youth and innocence might share his beautiful thoughts without having to look into unveiled depths of loathsomeness. No man had a happier life, and no man owed more to marriage. But for

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the influence of this young wife, the pages of his greatest novels might have been spoiled by the brutalities which she persuaded him to abandon.

These things the Count confessed with almost boyish frankness. And yet, so complex is human nature and the workings of the human mind, that no man in the whole range of literature has held bitterer views of the influence of women upon the higher nature of men. As I saw these two sitting together, after thirty years of unbroken love and sympathy, it was hard to believe that I was talking to the author of the "Kreutzer Sonata."

Ten years before I went to Yasnaya Poliana, Count Tolstoy was reading the story of the execution of a group of officers who planned the liberation of the serfs under Nicholas I., when he was seized with a longing to write a romance on the subject that would stir the world.

"But to write such a story I must learn the Russian language more thoroughly," he said to the Countess. "The great ethical truths of the world must be repeated in a new dialect every

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

generation. I will go out on the road that runs past our house and talk to the pilgrims who are going to the holy places in Moscow. I will write down every new word that has any new meaning to me. I must learn to write as the peasants speak. I must learn to think as the peasants think."

So the Count went out on the highway, and day after day he wandered along with the hungry pilgrims and studied the human soul through the human tongue. Beneath the rags and dirt and physical suffering of the pilgrims his eagle eyes discerned a quiet contentment and sense of happiness that troubled him.

"How is it," he would say to the Countess, as he returned at nightfall dusty and bronzed by the weather, "how is it that these people live without money and are happy? I cannot understand it."

As the weeks grew into months the lines on the novelist's forehead wore deeper and his eyes became sadder.

"No, I can't understand it," he would say. "These peasants and pilgrims are happy, really happy. It is no delusion. They know what



*Count Tolstoy*



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

it is to live. And yet we, who have money and everything that education can give us, are without this peace."

Then the avatar occurred. The soul of the romancist and poet died, and the soul of the reformer and prophet was born.

"It is religion," he cried. "The Church, the blessed Church gives them peace. They care nothing for hunger and nakedness and homelessness when they feel the consolations of true faith. We alone are living without real religion. That is why we cannot understand the happiness of the pilgrims. We are wasting ourselves on empty luxuries."

The Count began to go to church. For days at a time he would pray before the holy ikons. Sometimes prostrating himself face downward for hours on the cold pavement. By fasting, meditation, and appeal he sought heaven. He sternly trampled his grand artist nature under foot.

At this time the reign of Alexander II. ended in a spray of blood, and his stolid son ascended the throne. The liberal epoch had closed. Tolstoy was present in the church of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the Kremlin when Alexander III. was crowned, and heard the multitude swear the oath of allegiance. Human eyes never looked upon a more brilliant spectacle than that which surrounded the new emperor, as, with uplifted hand and streaming eyes, he repeated the solemn coronation vows. Tolstoy returned to his Moscow residence in a profound fit of sadness. The Countess was unable to understand the cause of his new unrest, and he was too much absorbed in his own thoughts to offer any explanation. A great light was dawning in his soul. Finally the Count opened his Bible, and turning to the Sermon on the Mount he came to this passage:—

“But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by Heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”

The oath in the great cathedral, the uplifted

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

hands, the open Bible, the droning voice of the richly clad priest, the smoke of incense floating upward among the ancient banners, the gleaming malachite and gold — the whole scene was in his mind. The brilliant aristocrat of Russian literature tripped over a verse in the New Testament and arose from the ground a peasant prophet, crying out, in a wilderness of formalism, that the Christianity of the nineteenth century had rejected Christ. In an instant the Greek church for him had crumbled into dust.

“The Church is a false teacher,” he said to the Countess. “I have with my own eyes seen its priests administering an oath upon the very scriptures that forbid oaths. I will trust the Church no more. I must read the gospels for myself.”

A few lines further on Tolstoy read aloud : “But I say unto you that ye resist not evil ; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

That was a moment of soul tempest. The old familiar Bible words were enchanted.

“Then what is the meaning of these hun-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

dreds of thousands of soldiers wearing the uniform of the Czar, blessed by the Church, night and morning, and trained to kill their fellow-men," he cried. "If it is wrong to resist evil, then it is wrong to arm men with deadly weapons and turn the world into a military camp. Swear not! Resist not evil! How cruelly the Church has blinded men to the real teachings of Christ. Away with it!"

Day after day Tolstoy studied the New Testament. As he read on, his conviction that the words of Christ were to be taken literally, grew firmer. He talked to the Countess as though he had discovered some new book, repeating to her again and again passages that seemed to conflict with the whole system of modern society.

"All this ceremony and theological mystery is a mockery of true religion," he said. "Christianity is simply love; not the love of one person, but the love of all persons, without distinction of age, sex, relationship, or nationality. Love is religion, and religion is love."

Then began that sweeping, weird change

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

in the Count's life. His splendid house in Moscow was shut up, and he went to make his home with the rough peasants of Yasnia Poliana. His country residence soon gave evidence of his purpose. The carpets disappeared from the floors, the walls were stripped bare, and all objects of luxury were banished. The Count put on the coarse dress of the common moujik, and buckled a leather belt around his waist. He ploughed the fields with his own hands.

"I have no right to ask other men to work with their muscles and avoid manual toil myself," he said simply. The village shoemaker became the Count's chum, and the novelist soon began to make shoes in a little workshop of his own. He fraternized with the peasants, and sent his daughters among them to brighten their lives. Work and love became his religion.

Much of this I heard while I sat with the Countess Tolstoy and her daughters and consumed my black bread and coffee. Then I went down into the little dingy room where the Count worked as a shoemaker. Tolstoy had just come in from a long walk in the snow,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

and was brushing the wet drops from his beard and blouse. I never saw a more earnest countenance than that which he turned to me as he curled one leg up under him and clasped his muscular hands over his knee. It was all so simple and real — a man who had struggled out of conventionality, back into naturalness. A spectacled, professorial disciple of the Count, dressed in peasant garb, and belted at the waist, sat on a shoe bench and reverently watched his leader.

“The story of the ‘Kreutzer Sonata’ is simply a protest against animality and an appeal for the Christianity of Christ,” said the Count, searching me with his keen, candid eyes.

“But surely,” I said, “you dare not hold up that awful picture as a portrait of the average men and women of to-day?”

Tolstoy’s face was alive with eagerness.

“Why not?” he said, as he knotted and unknotted his big fingers. “Why not? Is it not life? Is it not the truth?”

“No,” I answered. “I cannot say that it is. There is more pure, noble, spiritual love in marriage than you give humanity credit for.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

You judge the many by the few. You frighten men and women, drawn together by love, into the belief that there must be something base and loathsome in it."

"Bah! That is how we talk to ourselves," said the Count. "And the most terrible feature of the whole business is that we go on practising this half-conscious self-deceit. We cater to our base passions, and try to persuade ourselves that we have done some high, disinterested deed. Why not be honest, and look at the ugly facts? We approach marriage with preparations that give the lie to our hypocritical pretensions of purity."

"That is a condemnation that needs evidence to support it, Count," I said; "and I think you will find it hard to justify in your own mind, when you look back upon your own married life, the conclusion that the whole plan of nature is wrong, and that men and women who unite with no consciousness of impure motives may not safely trust the promptings that are within them."

Tolstoy unbuckled his belt, and clasped his hands behind his head.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“There you fall into the mistake of those who will not see the truth, because they dread the result of a sincere self-judgment,” he said, and his spectacled disciple nodded his head vigorously. “A man or woman has two natures—the animal and the spiritual. If a man deceives himself into believing that a purely physical passion is an attribute of his higher nature, of course he will go on indulging it and increasing it at the expense of his spiritual growth. That is why I protest against the common idea of married love. It is too much associated with personal gratification, too narrow and selfish, and too much directed to brute pleasure. It is not wrong to eat, but it is bestial to make eating an absorbing object of thought. A man should eat to satisfy hunger, but if he allows his mind to run on his food, he will become a glutton and beast at the cost of his soul. Eating is neither to be praised nor condemned. It is nature.”

“And you mean to say, Count, that it is the result of your observation that brute passion is commonly mistaken for love in marriage?”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"I do. It is the principal source of marital unhappiness—the awakening, the disillusionment. We are all hypocrites to ourselves."

"But I, too, have seen much of the world," I insisted, "and I deny the facts on which your argument is based. What would you say if I told you that I myself was in love, without any carnal consciousness?"

"I would say that you were arguing against yourself to hide the ugly truth. I would say that at the bottom crouched the animal."

"But if the animal is at the bottom, and not at the top, in what does pure affection suffer?"

"Let me explain," said the Count, standing up. "If you take a rope tied to the top of a maypole in your hand, and make it your object merely to go around the pole, the rope will not rise. The rope is your nature. If you make the animal passions a centre for your life, your nature will become baser and baser. Turn your back on the brute, and strain in the opposite direction, and the rope will rise, all that is fine and imperishable in you will be lifted up—real love, the love that knows no selfish cravings."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Then you would counsel me never to marry?”

“No; I never would give you such advice. If you are sure that you really love a woman, and that you love her purely, marry her. Try to live with her as you would live with your sister. Do not be afraid that the human race will die out. Children will be born of such a marriage, but the love on which it is founded will exist independent of the body — a real love that no change can affect, and from which there will be no rude awakening.”

As Tolstoy ceased speaking, I repeated to him Tennyson’s argument in “The Princess”:

“For woman is not undeveloped man,  
But diverse; could we make her as the man  
Sweet love were slain; his dearest bond is this,  
Not like to like, but like in difference.  
Yet in the long years liker must they grow;  
The man be more of woman, she of man.  
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,  
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;  
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,  
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind,  
Till at the last she set herself to man  
Like perfect music unto noble words;  
And so these twain, upon the skirts of time,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Sit side by side, full summ'd in all their powers,  
Dispensing harvest, sowing the to-be,  
Self reverent each and reverencing each,  
Distinct in individualities,  
But like each other ev'n as those who love.  
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men ;  
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and  
calm,  
Then springs the crowning race of humankind."

"Yes," said the Count, when I had ended, "that is a good picture; but Tennyson was a rhymster. I cannot endure that sort of a poet. When a man has found a word that expresses his thought accurately, and changes that word for the sake of a rhyme, he is a trifler. It is true, though, that a man and a woman joined in pure love make the perfect being."

"In your indictment of the motives that lead to marriage in these days," I said, "you have not counted greatly on the craving for children. Is not the maternal and paternal feeling a desire for a sort of immortality — a longing to renew one's self beyond the grave, to live again in one's children, with all the errors corrected? Is not this united aspiration of the body and soul pure beyond reproach?"

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The Count paced the floor of the shoemaker's room, swinging his long arms as he talked.

"It is nature," he said. "It is like hunger — neither good nor bad."

"But is it not spiritual? Is not the love of children for dolls the first faint awakening of the soul to this idea?"

"No. In the first place it does not exist in boys, although it is undeniably true that the desire for children is often strong in the minds of pure girls. As I have said, it is simply nature, like the desire for sleep or food."

"You speak, Count, of unselfishness as the distinguishing mark of pure love. Is not marriage unselfish? Is it not actually the beginning of a life in which each lives for the other, in which each surrenders personal ideas for the sake of the other?"

Tolstoy laughed harshly, and laid his great hand on my shoulder.

"How can you ask that?" he said. "Marriage is the worst kind of selfishness, for it is double. There is no egotism like family egotism. In the selfishness of their life the husband and wife forget the love they owe to the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

rest of the world. Real love is simply the cohesive force of the spirit which draws the whole race together. That cohesive force I call God. God is simply love. That is what Christ tried to tell the world, but the churches have put another message in his mouth.

"Yes, yes, I know they say I have declared that marriage is a failure. That is nonsense. It is a failure when husband and wife fail to look upon mere passion as selfishness, and as the enemy of spiritual growth. From the worldly standpoint marriage ought to be a great success. Married life is the most economical life. A man stays at home instead of rioting abroad. I know that before I was married I was always in need of money, no matter how much my income was. In the very first month of my married life I found that I had more money than I really needed."

"Count Tolstoy," I said, "how do you define the soul as separate from the body during life? There are faculties of the higher nature that can vanish. The doctors will explain it by telling you that a certain part of the brain is diseased. When the skull is opened after

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

death they can show you the destroyed tissue."

"Lies! lies! lies!" said Tolstoy, fiercely. I had struck him in a tender part. "The belief in doctors has reached the point of superstition. It is the fetish of the century. It used to be miraculous images; now it is doctors. Who verifies their statements? No one. People pretend to look at the evidence, but they don't."

"But if I knock you into unconsciousness, what becomes of the soul without the body?"

"You might just as well ask me where my spirit is when my body is asleep. The soul is simply consciousness and love. It is personality, not individuality. Identity may perish, but personality is indestructible. Consciousness of my being and love for my fellow-man are the substance; the body is only the shadow. If there is anything missing in the shadow, it must also be missing in the substance. The soul is related to the body in this thing only. If a man be paralyzed from head to foot and his consciousness remains, he is alive. If he can wink, he may communicate with others. If he be a king, and a man is brought before

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

him for judgment, he can, with a movement of his eyelid, say whether life or death shall be the result. The soul is there complete, even though the body may be all but dead."

"And you think that the Christian world has rejected Christ?"

"The real Christ—yes. But men are growing better, and the Christian idea of equality will in the end control."

"But there are some of Christ's teachings, which, if taken literally, can hardly be realized in our present social condition. Christ would have you set an unrepentant fallen woman at the table beside your wife and daughters."

"Why not?" said the Count. "Such a woman is the same in my eyes as my wife or daughters. She is simply unfortunate."

"You would not seat her at your table?"

"I certainly would."

"What right have you to expose innocence and purity to the touch of vice? What right have you to let your own flesh and blood run the risk of corruption?"

"Modern Christians believe that human nature is evil," said the Count, "but the Chinese

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

believe that human nature is good. In this I am Chinese. When good and evil are brought together on equal ground, the good must prevail. That is a law of the universe."

A moment later the giant had his arm around the neck of his golden-haired little son who had stolen into the room. And philosophy was ended for that day.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Tolstoy and his People*

I HARDLY know how it came about, but early the next day I found myself floundering along through the snow in moujik's boots with Tolstoy's eldest daughter. After a few minute's struggle through the whistling white storm we were in the actual village of Yasnia Poliana, a double row of straw-thatched huts on a dreary plain. The young Countess stepped around the monstrous drifts of snow with the grace and agility of a deer. Every peasant uncovered before her, and muttered a blessing.

We entered a hut, and a low chorus of welcome greeted us. We were in the presence of that Russia for whose sake Tolstoy had abandoned rank and wealth. A heavy-faced, hairy man—a deaf mute, who had once been a serf

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

—sat at a table eating black bread. Two half-naked, rosy children sprawled playfully beside his plate. The black eyes of the peasant glistened with pleasure, and the lines in his face softened when he saw Tolstoy's daughter. His wife and daughter were weaving clothes for themselves. They stood up and curtsied.

Medicine for the baby. The little one swallowed it greedily. The pet lamb was brought out to bleat at the Countess's feet and lick her white hand. The sick sheep were in the bedroom.

We sat down in the dim hut and listened to the family joys and woes. The sheep were not breeding well, and the outlook was hard. Would the Countess come and look at the horse they had bought for thirty-five roubles, and give her opinion? We went into the stockade behind the hut, and the Countess examined the horse's teeth and feet. Ideas were exchanged, and advice given.

Then we trudged through the bitter storm to the big school hut. It was crowded with tousle-headed boys and girls chanting the Russian alphabet in every key, while a swarthy young man, plainly embarrassed by our presence, tried

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

to awe the giggling scholars into silence by haughtily “eyeing them over.” The little Countess had once been their teacher, and no one could frighten them in her presence; and she went from one to the other, examining their attempts at writing, patting their heads and commanding good work. This school was supported by Count Tolstoy, and his two daughters were the teachers until the Russian authorities refused to permit it any longer, lest the Countesses might put liberal ideas into the children’s minds.

As we walked back through the desolate street, we were invited into another hut. A blind, white-haired woman and her two fat but pretty daughters sat at their spinning wheels, in the rude glory of embroidered peasant costumes. A letter from a relative had arrived. Would the Countess read it to them? Of course she would. The fair young girl, with the snow still sparkling on her skirt and boots, seated herself in the midst of them, and began to read the coarse scrawlings, nodding now at one and now at another, as references were made to different members of the family.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

It was all so simple, so genuine. She sat there like a peasant among peasants, sharing the sorrows and perplexities and humors of their lives.

I had seen the Russia of Tolstoy.

And when we went back to the house, the Count took me with him for a long walk. The storm had died away, and the snowflakes drifted lightly through the air. A distant tinkle of sleighbells sounded over the frozen stretches.

When Tolstoy goes out for his daily walk he dresses like any simple peasant, and I could hardly realize that the rough Colossus striding along so swiftly beside me in the deep snow was the high priest of Russian letters.

"You newspaper writers are an irreverent tribe," he said.

The statement being true, I made no reply. Presently the Count forgot the subject.

"You have a Colonel Ingersoll in America," he said, as we descended through a little copse of birch trees, "a loose talker who has said some foolish words. He argues that Christ's Sermon on the Mount is not practical when applied to our present industrialism. I am

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

strongly tempted to write a book on this man's shallow teachings. He is an ignoramus. He talks as if industrialism were a law instead of a product of human activity which can be changed. The truth is, that the whole system of compulsion is wrong. Every enemy of human liberty relies upon it. No man should be compelled to do anything against his will. In my new work I intend to quote Thomas Jefferson's declaration that the least government is the best government. He might have gone a step forward, and said that no government at all is better still."

"That suggests socialism."

"I know it does."

"You will find Thomas Jefferson a poor witness for a socialistic argument."

"And you don't believe in socialism?" asked the Count.

"No. The American idea is to throw as much responsibility as possible on the individual and so develop individual character instead of merging individuality into the mass of society. Americans as a whole believe that when you try to level man you level downward,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

not upward. But Americans also hold that society must wield certain enumerated powers of government, in order to restrain the ruthless and the lawless."

"Lawless? Why should there be any laws?"

"Because without them contracts could not be enforced nor individual rights guarded."

"And why should contracts be enforced? When a man does not wish to do a thing, why should he be forced to do it?"

"Otherwise great human enterprises could not be prosecuted," I answered.

"But why should these great enterprises be carried on by force?"

"Because — even looking at things from your own standpoint — railways, and bridges, and ships, and telegraphs, bring men closer together, and hasten the day when the whole world will be simply one big family."

The Count strode through the snow in silence.

"There is something in that. Anything that brings us men's thoughts is good."

"Without the printing press I could not have

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

known your teachings in New York, six thousand miles away."

"True; but mankind has lost the true path, and it would be better to go backward and find the right way of life — the way of love — than to build bridges. Without human slavery the pyramids of Egypt could not have been built. What of it? We can do without the pyramids, but we cannot do without human liberty. I saw a terrible thing in the city of Toula. I went there to look after the son of my shoemaker friend who is an apprentice, and I found that he was working from six o'clock every morning until twelve o'clock every night. Shoes are useful, but it is better to go barefooted than to spoil boys. If we can have the great enterprises you speak of without violating the law of love, let them be continued, otherwise let them stop. It is better to live as the peasants live here and follow in the footsteps of Christ, than to build up vast systems of material wealth at the expense of the spiritual life."

"Did you ever hear of the Irish soldier who insisted that the only man in the regiment who was in step was himself?" I said.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The tall Count was wading through a dangerous part of the road. He stopped and raised his hand.

"That is not my idea at all," he said. "What I object to is the way in which men argue to themselves to prove that their selfish and immoral lives are based upon the teachings of Christ. The Master is not to be understood by any particular passage of His teachings. It is the spirit of His utterances as a whole that condemns our civilization. Christ would be an outcast among the Christians of the nineteenth century."

As we pressed forward into the high road, a splendid sleigh dashed past us, and a distinguished-looking man clad in rich sables, a jewelled broach flashing in his scarf, lifted his fur cap and greeted Tolstoy with a marked air of deference.

"God bless you, brother," said the Count, simply.

Presently two trembling old men, in weather-stained sheepskin coats, and dirty felt boots, came creeping along the road, arm in arm. They were pilgrims on their way to the shrines

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of holy Moscow, weary and wretched. They stopped a few feet before us and, crossing themselves, uncovered and saluted the Count as a brother peasant.

"God bless you, brothers," said Tolstoy, baring his head. Then he took them by the hand, and led them back to the house, while I followed slowly, contrasting in my mind the great men I had met in the capitals of the world with this mighty spirit that could reach out and lift sorrowful, discouraged humanity — contrasting the Christianity of this barren, storm-swept Russian highway with the boulevards of Paris, with Piccadilly and with Broadway.

My wanderings have brought me to many scenes on the world's great highway, but I have never looked upon a more profoundly beautiful sight than that homeward walk.

We sat down to a rude dinner of vegetables spread over a long table resting on unpainted wooden trestles. It was a large room, bare of pictures or carpets. A piano was the only suggestion of luxury. The hungry pilgrims sat between Tolstoy's daughters. A slice of meat was placed before me. The Count

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

referred to it as "that corpse," and I pushed it away.

"And so you don't eat meat?"

"No," said the Count; "there is no reason why we should kill innocent animals when we can live just as well on vegetables. It is needless cruelty."

"But you chop down trees," I suggested. "A tree has life. It breathes through its leaves, drinks through its roots, has sap-blood flowing in its veins and a bark skin. We know by the ivy and the sensitive plant that vegetables can even think. How do you know that you do not inflict the most terrible pain when you cleave a tree with your axe?"

The Count sighed and turned his great face away.

"It may be so," he said; "but I know that a sheep is less sensitive than a man, a flea less sensitive than a sheep, and a tree less sensitive than a flea. I must grade my actions proportionately. It is necessary to fell a tree; it is unnecessary to kill a sheep."

When the dinner was cleared away and the lamps were lit in the room where many a pilgrim

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

has eaten and praised God, we gathered at a round table, where Tolstoy's wife and daughters knitted warm wraps for the peasants, and his three-year-old son danced a Russian dance when his father grimly refused to play "Puss in the corner." On one side of the table was the Countess Tolstoy, stately and beautiful, and on the other side sat the Count, his powerful features standing out in the dim light like bronze. Outside, the storm lashed the tops of the trees, and drifted the snow against the huts of the peasants. A broken-legged dog whined on the staircase.

It was then that I heard from the Countess of her plan for an audience with Alexander III. She hoped to soften the rigor of the brutal censorship that had turned her husband away from his art. I have since learned that her appeal to the Emperor was in vain. She begged him to relax the severity of the censors who had suppressed all that was splendid or vital in her husband's writings, in their blind effort to crush out liberalism. The Countess reminded her sovereign that Catherine the Great had made her reign glorious in history by drawing

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

around her the great writers of her time, instead of alienating them from the court. Alexander listened patiently to the eloquent woman who had come from dreary Yasnia Poliana, strong in the righteousness of her cause, and believing that her entreaty would meet with a broad and generous response. She forgot that the spirit of progress was buried in the grave of Alexander II., and that the ascendancy of Pobiedonostseff, the narrow-souled procurator-general of the Holy Synod, over the mind of his successor had destroyed all hope of reform. The Emperor heard her arguments as he heard the honest voice of Loris Melikoff pleading for a constitutional government, and he set his face against toleration. It is not too much to say that the failure of Tolstoy to write the last great novel which he planned was due to the inflexible opposition of the Czar.

Those who blame Tolstoy for his too literal Christianity, should see his surroundings, and then they may comprehend the stages by which he arrived at his present point of view. He is honest and sane. Even in the harshest

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

periods of his austere life he has seemed to be happy. No one familiar with the facts can doubt that, however erratic his course has been, he has aroused in the thinking people of Russia a partial sense of the social, industrial, and political iniquities against which his peasant life has been a standing protest. I have told the story of his union with and separation from the Greek church, but I have not told all. There are other details which do not belong to the public, but which would help to explain the life of this extraordinary man.

While we talked together that night Tolstoy told me that he could never give up his idea that physical labor was a duty imposed upon every man, and that he would continue until his dying day to plough in the field, and to make shoes, no matter what society might say. He illustrated his labor creed by quoting the words of Timothy Michailovitch Bondareff, the Russian peasant whose interdicted book was made known to the world by the Count:—

“ You may give all the treasures in the world to purchase a child, but it will not then be your own. It never has been yours and never can

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

be. It belongs only to its own mother. It is the same with the question of food. A man may neglect the duty of laboring for bread; he may buy a loaf with money. But that loaf still belongs to the person whose labor earned it. For, even as a woman cannot purchase motherhood with money, nor in any other way, so a man ought, by the work of his own hands, to procure the necessary food for his own subsistence and that of his wife and children. He cannot elude the obligation by any means, whatever may be his rank or merit."

Here, then, was the secret of Tolstoy's life—love and labor. He worked four hours every day with his pen, but he also did his stint of manual toil. He went out among the down-trodden peasants, not only to preach the holiness of labor, but to share with them the satisfaction and dignity of producing wealth with his own hands. Imagine Shakespeare, or Goethe, or Dante, or Hugo, or Thackeray leading such a crusade in their declining years!

Through the mist of years that has gathered since I went to Yasnaya Poliana I can look back

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

and see Tolstoy reading Bondareff's will as though it were his own:—

"I will order my son not to bury me in the cemetery, but in the ground, which, cultivated by my arms, has furnished our daily bread. I will pray him not to fill my grave with clay or sand, but with fertile earth, and to leave no mound or anything to indicate the place of my burial. I will direct him to continue every year to sow the place with good wheat. Later this land may belong to some other cultivator, and in this manner they will gather the bread of life from my grave to the end of the world. Men will speak of my obsequies from century to century, and many laborers will follow my example. Perhaps some among you, O ye nobles and rich men, will also be interred in the earth where men sow their grain!"

The country round about Yasnia Poliana is hard and desolate. There is little to remind the peasants of the outside world except the visitations of the Imperial Government in search of recruits for the army. They live on from generation to generation, sequestered from the feverish influences of modern civilization. Few of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

them understand Tolstoy. They know that he is a great author, and they have heard that the Emperor ordered him to live in the country because he was a zealous champion of the common people and reviled the aristocracy. But I cannot believe that they suspect the tenderness and pity with which he regards them. And yet the pilgrims who are fed at his table and sheltered beneath his roof carry to all parts of the empire tales of Tolstoy's goodness, and the village shoemaker, who has worked side by side with him, declares that, although the Count makes poor shoes, he has made the young men proud to be laborers.

---

Since the preceding lines were written, the hierarchy of the Greek church has formally excommunicated Count Tolstoy. Orthodox Christianity has cursed and rejected the one modern man who has tried to follow literally in the footsteps of Christ. And yet, when the intolerant bigots who struck his name from the Christian rolls are mouldering in forgotten graves, the influence of Lyoff Tolstoy's example and teachings will be a living influence in the world.

## CHAPTER VIII

*“The Butcher”*

WHILE the Cuban Republic was still wandering in the tall grass, and God was leading Spain to destruction over the well-worn path of tyranny, I had my first view of Captain-general Weyler in his Havana palace.

From the windows of the room in which we sat we could see the little church that covered the tomb of Columbus, whose ashes were soon to be carried back, under a furled and vanquished flag, to the land that sent him forth, four centuries before, with sword and cross, to carry the Spanish idea of Christianity into a new hemisphere.

It was a time of terror. The streets of Havana swarmed with spies, the dungeons of Morro Castle and the mighty Cabañas were crowded with Cuban patriots; and the trampled grass between the colossal walls of the vener-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

able fortress was stained with the blood of insurgents murdered in public with all the outward surroundings of law. From one end of Cuba to the other came stories of massacre and pitiless persecution.

Yet the armies of Gomez, Garcia, and Maceo still held the field, the Cuban junta in Havana, under the very nose of the terrible Captain-general, continued to hold its secret sessions, and the American newspaper correspondents, treading the secret precincts of insurgent activity, in the shadow of the royal palace, saw to it that the lamp of American sympathy was kept trimmed and burning brightly.

How delicately balanced are the decisive events of history sometimes! There are days when the destiny of a nation may be influenced by the slightest breath.

At such a time I saw Captain-general Weyler, the most sinister figure of the nineteenth century. He was a short, broad-shouldered man, dressed in a general's uniform, with a blood-red sash wound around his waist. His head was too large for his body. The forehead was

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

narrow, the nose and jaws prominent and bony; the chin heavy and projecting. The sharp lower teeth were thrust out beyond the upper rows, giving the mouth a singular expression of brutal determination. The eyes were gray and cold. The voice was harsh and guttural—a trace of his Austrian ancestry—and he jerked his words out in the curt manner of a man accustomed to absolute authority. It was a smileless, cruel face, with just a suggestion of treachery in the crows' feet about the eyes; otherwise bold and masterful.

This was Don Valeriano Weyler, Marquis of Tenerife, the Spanish Captain-general, who had just ordered his army practically to exterminate the Cuban nation, the fierce disciple of Cortez and Alva, at the mention of whose name the women and children of unhappy Cuba shuddered; the incarnation of the surviving spirit of mediæval Europe, desperately struggling to retain a foothold in the western world. He was the guardian of the last remnant of Spanish authority in the hemisphere once controlled by Spain; a worthy instrument

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

to close the most unspeakable period of colonial government.

"You have set your hand to a difficult task," I ventured.

"We shall crush the insurgents like that," and the Captain-general closed his hand as though he were strangling something.

"It is hard to extinguish the republican spirit on this side of the Atlantic," I said. "It feeds on the air."

"I have two hundred thousand Spanish soldiers and fifty generals," said Weyler. "If it were not for the encouragement of the Americans, the Cubans would lie down like whipped dogs."

It was the voice of the Middle Ages that spoke.

"Two hundred thousand troops against a few half-starved men?" I said. "Isn't it strange that the struggle continues?"

"No!" — the jaws snapped viciously — "the Cubans are fighting us openly; the Americans are fighting us secretly."

"How do you account for it?"

The Captain-general stared at me and moved

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

his jaws with an unpleasant chewing motion. Then he rose from his chair and paced the room. It is hard to convey an idea of the expression in his sullen eyes.

"The American newspapers are responsible," he cried with a sudden passion. "They poison everything with falsehood. They should be suppressed."

"But the American newspapers did not stir up Mexico and Peru and the other Spanish-American colonies to rebellion," I answered. "The American newspapers were not in existence when the Netherlands fought against the Spanish crown for independence. It is the custom in these times to lay the blame for everything on the newspapers. The newspapers did not organize or arm the Cuban insurgents. Why are the Cubans fighting at all?"

"Because they are lawless; because they hate authority."

"Who made them lawless? Spain has controlled this island for four hundred years."

Weyler turned in a fury and struck the table with his fist.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Men like you," he snarled, "who excite rebellion everywhere—meddlesome scribblers."

"Your Excellency flatters me."

"Take care," he said, with a threatening frown. "I have a long arm. The penalty for trafficking with the insurgents is death; do you understand that—death!"

His teeth shone between his lips; his eyes were the eyes of an angry wolf.

"I understand; but my death would not help the Spanish cause. There are a hundred other writers in New York eager to take my place."

At that moment the door opened. A small, pale man entered the room and laid some papers on Weyler's desk. The intruder gave me a sidewise glance. I recognized him. He was a spy of the Cuban insurgents, attached to the palace; a shrewd, soft-footed, silent man. He withdrew as quietly as he came, and glancing slyly over his shoulder at the Captain-general, whose back was turned, he raised his eyebrows and smiled.

"Remember," said Weyler, as I left him, "you will be watched in all that you do here. My eyes will be on you night and day."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

That night I was surprised by the sudden appearance of a New York correspondent who had incurred the death penalty by visiting the insurgent army. It was known that Weyler's spies were searching for him in every part of the island. He walked into the Hotel Inglaterra, and sat down in the café among the chattering Spanish officers with a jaunty insouciance that well became his daring character.

"Nice evening," he remarked coolly, nodding to me across the table.

"Great God," I whispered, "don't you know—"

"Yes, I know," he answered quickly. "They're looking for me, but this is the last place they will expect to find me. Don't whisper; it will excite suspicion. I've dropped my identity for the present. I'm Mr. Brown—Mr. Brown, of New York—travelling about in search of a chance to make good investments."

"How did you get here?"

"Came down from Key West on the regular steamer."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"But I thought you were hiding somewhere in Cuba."

"Not at all. I escaped from the island, but I couldn't keep away. To-morrow I'll start through the tall grass for the insurgent army, and I'll stay with it till the fight is won or the Cuban Republic is wiped out. Poor old Weyler! How mad he'll be when he reads my next despatches from Maceo's headquarters."

It is doubtful whether the Captain-general ever realized the skill and coolness of some of the men who fought the battles of the Cuban Republic in the American press. They swarmed in his capital day and night; they wandered about, picking up rare old fans in the shops, gossiping with the officers in the restaurants, listening to the Spanish military concerts in the broad Prado or the plaza, admiring the Cuban girls at the barred windows, and apparently leading lives of careless indolence; but never for an hour did they relax their vigilance, and when a correspondent disappeared mysteriously for an hour or two, he was sure to be shut up somewhere with an insurgent agent,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

listening to the latest news of the struggle for liberty.

"The Spanish army then retreated," wrote one correspondent.

"I can't pass that," growled the Spanish military censor. "I will not allow any one to cable such a statement. You must correct it."

"Right," said the correspondent. "I made a mistake."

Then he wrote, "The Spanish army advanced gallantly rearward."

"Good!" cried the Spaniard, whose knowledge of English was somewhat hazy. "That is the truth. Spanish soldiers never retreat."

Thus the game of life and death was played in old Havana; and many a time the Spanish lion roared defiantly, unconscious of the fact that the despised correspondents had tied its tail in bowknots.

Weyler was simply the agent of a political theory that discontent should be cured by stern repression rather than by remedial legislation. It is a policy as old as the human race. It has always been a failure, but it springs up in every age. He did his work honestly and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

frankly. Cubans who refused to recognize Spanish authority must be killed. There were plenty to take their places.

I saw the Captain-general several times, and he was always the same stubborn tyrant. The newspapers were to blame for everything. They were the curse of civilized society. It would be better for the world if every editor and correspondent were shot.

The time had come to put Weyler to the test. In Campo Florida, a village eight miles distant from Havana, forty or fifty unarmed, peaceable Cubans had been dragged from their homes, and without accusation or trial, butchered on the roadside by order of the local military commander. This awful deed was simply an incident in Weyler's great plan for the restoration of peace by the murder of all persons suspected of giving aid to the insurgents. In order to keep up appearances, the officer who directed the uniformed assassins made an official report announcing a battle at Campo Florida, with an enumeration of the enemy's dead.

It was important to prove the responsibility

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of the Spanish crown for barbarities like these, and I made my way to Campo Florida at night. Guided by two patriotic Cubans, I found the place where the victims had been hurriedly buried. A few strokes of a spade uncovered the ghastly evidences of murder. The hands of the slain Cubans were tied behind their backs. The sight revealed by the flickering light of our lanterns would have moved the hardest heart. I made a vow in that moment that I would help to extinguish Spanish sovereignty in Cuba, if I had to shed my blood for it. That vow was kept.

With a list of the murdered Cubans and all the circumstances of their death, I appeared once more before the Captain-general in his palace. The whole story was told. Weyler's dull eyes glittered dangerously. His lips grew white.

"Well," he said, when I had finished, "what do you come to me for?"

"You have declared that the American newspapers were responsible for the Cuban rebellion."

"Yes."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Come with me and see the real cause of the war. I will show you men, supposed to have been killed in fair fight on the field, with their hands bound behind them. I will prove to you crimes against civilization committed by the Spanish army in the name of Spain."

"Lies! vile lies! The Cuban agitators have deceived you!" cried Weyler.

"You have heard the simple truth. I have seen the victims with my own eyes."

"And you dare—"

"To tell the truth—yes. I dare not do anything else."

"I will expel you from the island."

"You may do that, but how will it help matters? I am a mere cog in a vast machine. I have come to you fairly and frankly with proofs of an almost incredible crime against humanity. If your only answer is a decree of exile, you will confess that the Spanish government is responsible."

The rage of the Captain-general whitened his face. It would be hard to imagine a more malignant countenance. The veins in his forehead swelled; his hands twitched.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“I will make an example of you,” he roared.

“You may threaten me, but the power I represent is beyond any government; it is elemental in America.”

“I will send you out of Cuba and you shall not return without the consent of the Spanish government.”

“You can force me to go, but I will return some day without permission from Spain. Good day, sir.”

“Good day.”

And that was my last sight of the most monstrous personality of modern times until I saw him slouching through the streets of Madrid a week before the United States unsheathed the sword for Cuba. Weyler kept his word and made me an exile from Cuba. But I returned to the island just in time to take a Spanish flag with my own hand, and to see the smoking hulks of Cervera’s fleet along the Cuban shore.

---

“Why did we allow Weyler to live?” repeated the gray-haired Cuban leader. “Because he was more useful to us alive than dead.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Assassination? No, no! the time has gone when assassination could help any cause in the world. It is a fool's argument. A dozen patriots offered to kill the Captain-general and die with him. We could have destroyed him at almost any moment. But we would not stain our cause with murder. He little thought, when he issued his bloody commands, that we were always at his very elbow, always within striking distance. If we had assassinated Weyler, we would have lost the sympathy of the American people and destroyed our only chance for liberty and independence. There is nothing equal to patience in a fight against oppression."

---

It was a strange experience for a man exiled from Cuba as an enemy of Spain to stand before the Spanish Prime Minister in Madrid. Yet there I was. Don Canovas del Castillo was not only the actual head of the government, but the supreme political and moral leader of his people. His voice was the voice of the nation. It was he who seated the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

reigning dynasty on the throne, and his hand wrote the constitution of the monarchy.

He looked like an old lion as he sat in his splendid audience room, under Velasquez's matchless portraits of Philip IV. and Louis XIV. in their childhood, his dark eyes flashing beneath his massive forehead and shaggy, white brows. No one could have looked upon that strong, venerable face and heard that hard, steely voice, without knowing that Spain was ready to meet her fate, whatever it might be, and that Spanish pride was as unyielding and unreasonable as in the days of Charles V., when his sceptre swayed Europe.

"My government will not yield an inch to force or to threats of force," he said. "Spain will make no concession until the insurrection in Cuba has been brought under control, and until we can give, of our own free will, what we refuse to allow any one to take, either by armed insurrection or by treasonable intrigue with other nations. Independent Cuba would mean a government dominated by negroes; not such negroes as are to be found in the United States, but African negroes, African in every

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

sense. Independent Cuba would mean civil war between whites and blacks ; it would mean fifty years of anarchy ; it would mean the destruction of the island and its commerce. Such a republic would be a menace to the peace of the United States. It would be worse than Hayti, far worse. Spain cannot undertake to be guided in her domestic affairs by any other government, nor can she allow any foreign agitation to influence her in dealing with her rebellious colony. We seek peace, but we will not shrink from war in any matter touching our honor. If the United States forces war upon Spain, we are ready to defend ourselves, but we are determined that Spain shall be the nation attacked, and not herself the aggressor. Spain will defend herself at all hazards. The question of the comparative strength of nations will not enter into the matter at all. We are ready to meet whatever the future holds for us."

That future, which the lionlike Premier challenged so bravely, held death by assassination for him and a bloody defeat for his country.

When the mobs of Madrid were shrieking

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

defiance to the United States in the Puerto del Sol, and the wild bulls furnished by the last descendant of Columbus were fighting to raise money for a warship to be used against the new-world champions of Cuba, I went with a friend to see the Escurial, that monastery-fortress where Philip II. retired to nurse his gouty leg after God and England had destroyed the Armada.

As we descended into the wonderful marble crypt which holds the dust of all the sovereigns of Spain, my companion uncovered and said:—

“Dead glory riseth never.”

## CHAPTER IX

### *Familiar Glimpses of Yellow Journalism*

**I**T has been said by those calm students of human events who were untroubled by the cries of oppressed Cuba, that the war between the United States and Spain was the work of the "yellow newspapers"—that form of American journalistic energy which is not content merely to print a daily record of history, but seeks to take part in events as an active and sometimes decisive agent.

That was a saying of high reproach when the armed struggle began and when Continental Europe frowned upon the American cause. "Yellow journalism" was blood guilty. It had broken the peace of the world. Its editors were enemies of society and its correspondents ministers of passion and disorder. Its lying clamors had aroused the credulous mob, overthrown the dignified policies of government, and dishonored international law.

*yellow* speech & press  
for good & peace

---

## ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY

But when the results of that conflict justified the instrumentalities which produced it, when the world accepted the emancipation of Cuba from the bloody rule of Spain as a glorious step in the progress of mankind,—then the part played by the newspapers was forgotten, and “yellow journalism” was left to sing its own praises; and its voice was long and loud and sometimes tiresome.

Little politicians arose and, with their hands on their hearts, acknowledged that they had done the thing and were willing to have it known of men. Heroes of a three months’ war, who had faced the perils of tinned beef, bared their brows for the laurels of a grateful nation. The party in power at Washington solemnly thanked God that it had had the wisdom and courage to strike a blow for human liberty. The government’s press censors in Cuba and the Philippines were instructed to suppress the attempts of indignant “yellow journalism” to call attention to its own deeds.

And yet no true history of the war which banished Spain from the western hemisphere and released the Philippine archipelago from

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

her tyranny, can be written without an acknowledgment that whatever of justice and freedom and progress was accomplished by the Spanish-American war was due to the enterprise and tenacity of "yellow journalists," many of whom lie in unremembered graves.

As one of the multitude who served in that crusade of "yellow journalism," and shared in the common calumny, I can bear witness to the martyrdom of men who suffered all but death — and some, even death itself — in those days of darkness.

It may be that a desire to sell their newspapers influenced some of the "yellow editors," just as a desire to gain votes inspired some of the political orators. But that was not the chief motive; for if ever any human agency was thrilled by the consciousness of its moral responsibility, it was "yellow journalism" in the never-to-be-forgotten months before the outbreak of hostilities, when the masterful Spanish minister at Washington seemed to have the influence of every government in the world behind him in his effort to hide the truth and strangle the voice of humanity.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

How little they know of “yellow journalism” who denounce it! How swift they are to condemn its shrieking headlines, its exaggerated pictures, its coarse buffoonery, its intrusions upon private life, and its occasional inaccuracies! But how slow they are to see the steadfast guardianship of public interests which it maintains! How blind to its unfearing warfare against rascality, its detection and prosecution of crime, its costly searchings for knowledge throughout the earth, its exposures of humbug, its endless funds for the quick relief of distress!

Some time before the destruction of the battleship *Maine* in the harbor of Havana, the *New York Journal* sent Frederic Remington, the distinguished artist, to Cuba. He was instructed to remain there until the war began; for “yellow journalism” was alert and had an eye for the future.

Presently Mr. Remington sent this telegram from Havana:—

“W. R. HEARST, *New York Journal*, N.Y.:

“Everything is quiet. There is no trouble here. There will be no war. I wish to return.

“REMINGTON.”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

This was the reply:—

“REMINGTON, HAVANA:

“Please remain. You furnish the pictures, and I'll furnish the war.

“W. R. HEARST.”

The proprietor of the *Journal* was as good as his word, and to-day the gilded arms of Spain, torn from the front of the palace in Santiago de Cuba, hang in his office in Printing House Square, a lump of melted silver, taken from the smoking deck of the shattered Spanish flagship, serves as his paper weight, and the bullet-pierced headquarters flag of the Eastern army of Cuba — gratefully presented to him in the field by General Garcia — adorns his wall.

The incident which did more to arouse the sentimental opposition of the American people to Spain than anything which happened prior to the destruction of the *Maine*, was the rescue of the beautiful Evangelina Cisneros from a Havana prison by the *Journal's* gallant correspondent, Karl Decker. There is nothing in fiction more romantic than this feat of “yellow journalism.” And the events which led up to it are worth telling.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

One sultry day in August, 1897, the proprietor of the *Journal* was lolling in his editorial chair. Public interest in Cuba was weak. The Spanish minister at Washington had drugged the country with cunningly compounded statements. The government was indifferent. The weather was too hot for serious agitation. Every experienced editor will tell you that it is hard to arouse the popular conscience in August. Perspiring man refuses to allow himself to be worked into a moral rage. The proletariat of liberty was in a hole. The most tremendous headlines failed to stir the crowd.

An attendant entered the room with a telegram, which Mr. Hearst read languidly:—

“ HAVANA.

“ Evangelina Cisneros, pretty girl of seventeen years, related to President of Cuban Republic, is to be imprisoned for twenty years on African coast, for having taken part in uprising Cuban political prisoners on Isle of Pines.”

He read it over a second time and was about to cast it on his desk—but no! He stared at the little slip of paper and whistled softly. Then he slapped his knee and laughed.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Sam!” he cried.

A tall, shaven, keen-eyed editor entered from the next room.

“We’ve got Spain, now!” exclaimed Mr. Hearst, displaying the message from Cuba. “Telegraph to our correspondent in Havana to wire every detail of this case. Get up a petition to the Queen Regent of Spain for this girl’s pardon. Enlist the women of America. Have them sign the petition. Wake up our correspondents all over the country. Have distinguished women sign first. Cable the petitions and the names to the Queen Regent. Notify our minister in Madrid. We can make a national issue of this case. It will do more to open the eyes of the country than a thousand editorials or political speeches. The Spanish minister can attack our correspondents, but we’ll see if he can face the women of America when they take up the fight. That girl must be saved if we have to take her out of prison by force or send a steamer to meet the vessel that carries her away — but that would be piracy, wouldn’t it?”

Within an hour messages were flashing to

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Cuba, England, France, Spain, and to every part of the United States. The petition to the Queen Regent was telegraphed to more than two hundred correspondents in various American cities and towns. Each correspondent was instructed to hire a carriage and employ whatever assistance he needed, get the signatures of prominent women of the place, and telegraph them to New York as quickly as possible. Within twenty-four hours the vast agencies of "yellow journalism" were at work in two hemispheres for the sake of the helpless girl prisoner. Thousands of telegrams poured into the *Journal* office. Mrs. Jefferson Davis, the widow of the Confederate President, wrote this appeal, which the *Journal* promptly cabled to the summer home of the Queen Regent at San Sebastian :—

"To HER MAJESTY, MARIA CRISTINA, *Queen Regent of Spain* :—

"*Dear Madam*: In common with many of my countrywomen I have been much moved by the accounts of the arrest and trial of Señorita Evangelina Cisneros. Of course, at this great distance, I am ignorant of the full particulars

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of her case. But I do know she is young, defenceless, and in sore straits. However, all the world is familiar with the shining deeds of the first lady of Spain, who has so splendidly illustrated the virtues which exalt wife and mother, and who has added to these the wisdom of a statesman and the patience and fortitude of a saint.

“To you I appeal to extend your powerful protection over this poor captive girl—a child almost in years—to save her from a fate worse than death. I am sure your kind heart does not prompt you to vengeance, even though the provocation has been great. I entreat you to give her to the women of America, to live among us in peace.

“We will become sureties that her life in future will be one long thank-offering for your clemency.

“Do not, dear Madam, refuse this boon to us, and we will always pray for the prosperity of the young King, your son, and for that of his wise and self-abnegating mother.

“Your admiring and respecting petitioner,

“VARINA JEFFERSON DAVIS.”

Then Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, author of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” wrote this

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

appeal to the Pope, which the *Journal* cabled to the Vatican :—

“To HIS HOLINESS, LEO XIII.:

“*Most Holy Father*:—To you, as the head of Catholic Christendom, we appeal for aid in behalf of Evangelina Cisneros, a young lady of Cuba, one of whose near relatives is concerned in the present war, in which she herself has taken no part. She has been arrested, tried by court martial, and is in danger of suffering a sentence more cruel than death—that of twenty years of exile and imprisonment in the Spanish penal colony of Ceuta, in Africa, where no woman has ever been sent, and where, besides enduring every hardship and indignity, she would have for her companions the lowest criminals and outcasts.

“We implore you, Holy Father, to emulate the action of that Providence which interests itself in the fall of a sparrow. A single word from you will surely induce the Spanish government to abstain from this act of military vengeance, which would greatly discredit it in the eyes of the civilized world.

“We devoutly hope that your wisdom will see fit to utter this word, and to make not us alone, but humanity, your debtors.

“JULIA WARD HOWE.”



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The mother of President McKinley signed a petition to the Queen Regent. The wife of Secretary of State Sherman gave her name to the appeal, and soon the most representative women of the nation joined the movement. Fifteen thousand names were cabled by the *Journal* to the palace of San Sebastian. The country began to ring with the story of Evangelina Cisneros. Hundreds of public meetings were convened. The beautiful young prisoner became the protagonist of the Cuban struggle for liberty. Spain was denounced and the President was urged to lend his influence to the patriot cause of Cuba. The excitement grew day by day. It stirred up forces of sympathy that had lain dormant until then. The wily Spanish minister at Washington was in a trap. He did not dare to attack a movement supported by the wives and daughters of the great leaders of every political party in the United States.

How we worked and watched for poor Cuba in those days! How the tired writers stuck to the fight in those hot, breathless nights! And how the palace officials in Spain and the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Captain-general in Cuba cursed us for our pains!

Presently there came a message from Cuba. Karl Decker had carried out his instructions. "Yellow journalism" had broken the bars of the Spanish prison. The beautiful young prisoner was safe on the ocean and would be in New York in a few days.

Not only had the girl been lifted out of the prison window through the shattered iron barriers and carried from rooftop to rooftop in the night over a teetering ladder, but she had been secreted in Havana in spite of the frantic search of the Spanish authorities and, disguised as a boy, had been smuggled on board of a departing steamer under the very noses of the keenest detectives in Havana.

"Now is the time to consolidate public sentiment," said Mr. Hearst. "Organize a great open-air reception in Madison Square. Have the two best military bands. Secure orators, have a procession, arrange for plenty of fireworks and searchlights. Announce that Miss Cisneros and her rescuer will appear side by side and thank the people. Send men to all

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the political leaders in the city, and ask them to work up the excitement. We must have a hundred thousand people together that night. It must be a whale of a demonstration — something that will make the President and Congress sit up and think."

Who, of all the countless multitude that witnessed that thrilling scene in Madison Square, knew the processes by which "yellow journalism," starting with that little message from Havana, had set in motion mighty forces of sympathy, which increased day by day, until Congress met, and the conscience of the nation found its official voice.

The time has not yet come when all the machinery employed by the American press in behalf of Cuba can be laid bare to the public. Great fortunes were spent in the effort to arouse the country to a realization of the real situation. Things which cannot even be referred to now were attempted.

It was my fortune to interview Canovas del Castillo, the Prime Minister of Spain, a few months before the outbreak of the war. As I had been exiled from Cuba — whither I had

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

gone as a special correspondent for the *New York World*—by Captain-general Weyler, the experience in Madrid was doubly interesting.

“The newspapers in your country seem to be more powerful than the government,” said the lion-headed Premier.

“Not more powerful, your Excellency, but more in touch with the real sovereignty of the nation, the people. The government is elected only once in four years, while the newspapers have to appeal to their constituents every day in the year.”

If the war against Spain is justified in the eyes of history, then “yellow journalism” deserves its place among the most useful instrumentalities of civilization. It may be guilty of giving the world a lop-sided view of events by exaggerating the importance of a few things and ignoring others, it may offend the eye by typographical violence, it may sometimes proclaim its own deeds too loudly; but it has never deserted the cause of the poor and the downtrodden; it has never taken bribes,—and that is more than can be said of its most conspicuous critics.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

One of the accusations against “yellow journalism” is that it steps outside of the legitimate business of gathering news and commenting upon it — that it acts. It is argued that a newspaper which creates events and thus creates news, cannot, in human nature, be a fair witness. There is a grain of truth in this criticism; but it must not be forgotten that the very nature of journalism enables it to act in the very heart of events at critical moments and with knowledge not possessed by the general public; that what is everybody’s business and the business of nobody in particular, is the journalist’s business.

There are times when public emergencies call for the sudden intervention of some power outside of governmental authority. Then journalism acts. Let me give an instance.

When Admiral Camara was preparing to sail with a powerful Spanish fleet to attack Admiral Dewey in Manila Bay, two American monitors armed with ten-inch rifles were on their way across the Pacific to the Philippines. It was a perilous situation, more perilous than the American people were permitted to know.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

I have seen Admiral Dewey's letters to Consul General Wildman at Hong Kong, begging for news of the movements of the Spanish fleet and confessing that his squadron was too weak to meet it unless the two monitors should arrive in time. The threatened admiral made no secret of his anxiety. The question of victory or defeat or retreat depended on whether the Spanish fleet could be delayed until the powerful monitors had time to reach Manila.

In that critical hour, when the statesmen at Washington were denouncing "yellow journalism," I received the following message in the London office of the *New York Journal*:—

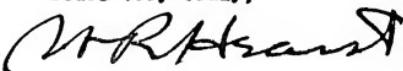
NOTE.—The letter is reproduced on the next page. .

NEW YORK JOURNAL  
W. R. HEARST.

Dear Mr. Creelman:-

I wish you would at once make preparations so that in case the Spanish fleet actually starts for Manila we can buy some big English steamer at the eastern end of the Mediterranean and take her to some part of the Suez Canal where we can then sink her and obstruct the passage of the Spanish warships. This must be done if the American monitors sent from San Francisco have not reached Dewey and he should be placed in a critical position by the approach of Camara's fleet. I understand that if a British vessel were taken into the canal and sunk under the circumstances outlined above, the British Government would not allow her to be blown up to clear a passage and it might take time enough to raise her to put Dewey in a safe position.

Yours very truly,



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Camara's fleet left Spain to attack Dewey and actually entered the Suez Canal; but the sinking of a steamer in the narrow channel was made unnecessary by the sudden abandonment of the expedition and the return of the Spanish admiral to the threatened coast of Spain.

One does not have to be a great lawyer to understand that the obstruction of the Suez Canal could not have been undertaken by any responsible representative of the American government without a grave breach of international law. Nor was there any existing private agency that could so well undertake such a costly and serious patriotic service as a newspaper whose correspondents kept it in almost hourly touch with the changing facts of the situation. I will not attempt to defend this contemplated deed as a matter of law. It needs no defence among Americans. The facts are given as an illustration of the part which the journalism of action is beginning to play in the affairs of nations, and the varying methods employed.

But journalism that acts is no new thing,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

although it is beginning to act on new lines. The *London Times* defended Queen Caroline against the persecutions of George IV. and was denounced as a vulgar meddler. The same newspaper, after compelling the recall of Lord Raglan from the command of the British forces in the Crimea, forced Lord Aberdeen's ministry to resign. That was "yellow journalism," and John Walter was bitterly assailed for his sensationalism. Again, in 1840, the *Times* went beyond the orthodox frontier of journalism and, at enormous risk and expense, exposed gigantic frauds, saving millions of dollars to the merchants of London. A marble tablet over the entrance of the *Times* office records the gratitude of the people of the British metropolis. The *New York Herald* sent Stanley to find Livingstone in Africa, and equipped the *Jeannette* expedition to search for the North Pole. The *New York Times* smashed the great Tweed Ring, which had plundered and defied the public for years. The *New York World* averted a national disgrace by providing a pedestal for the Statue of Liberty presented by the people of France. The same newspaper

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

defeated the famous bond conspiracy and compelled the Cleveland administration to allow the general public to compete in the \$100,000,000 loan, saving millions of dollars for the treasury and demonstrating the financial independence of the United States.

Surely, if it be right for a newspaper to urge others to act in any given direction, it is also right for the newspaper itself to act.

## CHAPTER X

### *Battle of El Caney*

FROM the torn hammock on which I lay among my comrades, under a strip of rain-soaked canvas, the tall figure of General Lawton could be seen moving in the gray dawning light, toward the mud-clogged road along which the American forces had been marching all night, in the direction of Santiago de Cuba, where the Spaniards stood in the trenches and fortifications awaiting the attack. The battle which ended the rule of Spain in the western world, after four centuries of glory and shame, was about to begin.

A sturdy little New York war artist, clad in a red blanket,—the only dry thing in our camp,—made his way through the bushes to a neighboring stream and returned with our canteens filled.

“No time to lose,” he said. “Lawton will open on El Caney at sunrise. His battery is in position now. Better not wait for breakfast.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

We have no fire, anyhow. Turn out, fellows — you've been asleep three hours." And the damp and sleepy correspondents arose to face another day's work.

Presently we were trudging along in the mire, tortured by the sour smells of the trampled vegetation, which yesterday's fierce sun had fermented, and the tropical fever, from which few escaped.

Monstrous land-crabs, green and scarlet, with leprous blotches of white, writhed across our path. Birds sang softly in the tangled chaparral and tall grass. Crimson and yellow blossoms glowed in the dense green growths. Troops of vultures wheeled lazily against the dawn-tinged clouds, or sat in the tall cocoanut palms. As the sun rose, it struck sparkles from the dripping foliage. But hunger and fever and news-eager journalism had no eye for these things. Before us were thousands of men preparing to die; nine miles behind us were steam vessels ready to carry our despatches to the cable station in Jamaica; and in New York were great multitudes, waiting to know the result of the battle.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

When we reached El Poso hill, with its crowded battalions creeping forward like thousand-footed brown caterpillars, I bade farewell to my companions, and, turning to the left, took the trail toward El Caney—for at midnight a friendly general had whispered in my ear that the real fight of the day was to be there.

It boots not to tell of that five miles' journey in the withering heat, along paths choked up with stalwart negro troops, through thorny thickets that stung the flesh, across swamps knee deep in water, over jungly hills and slimy streams. The stone fort on the hill before El Caney was plain to be seen, and there was but one thing for a correspondent without a horse to do,—make straight for it across the country, and let details take care of themselves; for the newspaper man must be in the very foreground of battle, if he would see with his own eyes the dread scenes that make war worth describing.

At last I reached the top of a little hill, so close to the gray fort, with its red and yellow flag streaming above its walls, that I

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

could see the Spanish faces under the row of straw hats in the outlying trench on the slope, and the shining barrels of the Mauser rifles projecting over the earthworks. Capron's battery, a mile and a half away, was hurling shells at the fort; and as the projectiles screamed overhead, the men in the trench ducked their heads. They were young men —not a beard among them; yet no Spaniard need hang his head for their conduct that terrible day.

It was a rumpled landscape of intense green, bounded by misty mountains on one side, and stretching toward a sea ridge on which could be discerned the ancient battlements of Morro Castle guarding the harbor of the city whose land approaches were obstructed by miles of intrenchments and barbed-wire fences. Nothing could surpass the beauty of that tangled scene, with its flowering hills, tall, tossing grasses, and groves of palm trees. And beyond the stretches of rolling country were the dim rooftops of Santiago.

El Caney was five miles to the right and slightly to the rear of our cavalry division,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

which was massed at El Poso in front of the intrenched slopes of San Juan. The generals had decided that the village and its stone fort must be captured by Lawton's division before the whole army could be joined for a united assault on the city. Chaffee's brigade was to make the frontal attack, while Ludlow's and Miles's brigades were to divert the enemy by an assault on the south side of El Caney.

"Whoo-o-o-oong!"

A shell from Capron's distant battery tore a hole in the stone fort. The Spaniards in the trench fired volleys at imaginary enemies in the brush—for the van of our army was far away.

The only sign of life about the fort itself was a black hen that ran out of an open door at the side and fluttered excitedly along the foot of the wall. There were men crouching with rifles behind the loopholed walls, but they kept out of sight.

From the boulder on which I sat under a sheltering bush I could see the tan-brown skirmish lines of Chaffee's brigade advancing over the hills, the sunlight flashing on their

*The Charge at El Caney*





## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

arms. And down in the valley to the left of the village, little brown squads and ranks stole from thicket to thicket, as Ludlow's and Miles's flanking regiments crept toward El Caney. Nearer, nearer, nearer, they moved, on the front and the side, emerging in quick dashes through open spaces or disappearing in the wild undergrowths, lying down, standing up, wheeling to the right or left, as the voice of the bugles commanded.

How strange it is to sit quietly, pencil in hand, and watch such a scene; to set down the sounds and colors as a matter of business — to be in the midst of the movement, but not a part of it! — but no stranger, surely, than to be moving on, rifle in hand, destined to kill some man against whom you have no personal grievance, some fellow-mortal with a home and kindred like your own.

As the infantry approached, the sound of volley-firing came from all sides, — a sharp, ripping noise, like the tearing of canvas. But there was no smoke. Bullets came singing over the hills, and little puffs of dust around the fort showed where they struck.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The Spaniards in the trench strained their eyes to catch a glimpse of the Americans. An officer stood on the breastworks and searched the scene through his field-glass. A soldier crawled along the wall of the fort and swept the field with a telescope. There was an element of mystery in smokeless fighting that puzzled the defenders of El Caney. Where was the enemy? On which side would the attack be made?

Suddenly line after line of dusty, brown skirmishers swept up to the ridges commanding the Spanish intrenchments and lay flat upon the ground. General Chaffee himself, with his hat on the back of his head, hurried up and down behind the prostrate Seventh and Seventeenth regiments of infantry, hoarsely urging his men to keep their ground and shoot straight, while the concentrated fire of all the intrenchments around El Caney tore up the grass.

“Keep her going, boys!” he shouted as his hat was shot from his head. “Don’t mind their fire; that’s what you’re here for. Keep her going! Steady there—ah! poor fellow!”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

A dead soldier rolled at his feet—a mere youth, with yellow hair and staring blue eyes. “Here! some one! take this man’s rifle and get in on the line!” And the general moved on, his harsh, quick commands being repeated by the officers kneeling along the lines.

Now the Twelfth Infantry began to press its brown ranks of cracking riflery into the sheltered gullies in front of the fort, and Company C, throwing itself face down on the hill where I sat, sent a steady fire into the Spanish trench. The Spaniards returned the volleys, but one by one we could see them fall behind the breastworks, here and there a leg or arm sticking up. The living men in the trench cowered down. But still the bullets came ting-ing, and the hilltop was strewn with our dead and dying. The garrison of the fort were using the loopholes.

Nothing moved at the fort but the black hen. As volley after volley swept the hill, she dashed to and fro, growing angrier every moment. Her feathers stood on end and she pecked savagely at the air. A more indignant fowl never trod the earth. She flapped

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

her wings and hopped into fighting attitudes as the bullets spattered around her. I could hear the soldiers laughing as the hen ran from side to side, believing that the whole battle was directed against herself. Poor creature! She escaped ten thousand bullets only to have her neck wrung by a hungry soldier that night.

Leaving the hill on which I had watched the fight for hours,—with occasional efforts to bandage the wounded or drag the dead off the firing line,—I went to the next ridge, where Chaffee and his two regiments were facing the main intrenchments of the village. By this time the infantry volleying was terrific. Dead and dying men and officers could be seen everywhere. The Spaniards were selling their sovereignty dearly.

And Chaffee! He raged up and down behind his men, the soul of war incarnate. His eyes seemed to flash fire. There never was a finer soldier nor a sterner face.

“For your country, boys! for your country!” he cried. “Here! get back on the line, damn you,” — a white-faced, exhausted soldier was

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

crawling backwards in the grass,—“and do your duty. You’ll have the rest of your life to loaf in when you get home.” A moment later the soldier rolled over on his side, and lay still. A few drops of blood stained his jacket.

While I talked with the general, a bullet clipped a button from his breast. He smiled in a half-startled, half-amused way. It had begun to rain. A bullet tore the cape from my rain-coat.

“Looks better without it,” said the general, smilingly.

What with heat, hunger, fever, and fatigue I could hardly stand. We sat down under a tree, and I told the general how close I had been to the fort and how long I had watched its defenders. Then I suggested a bayonet charge, and offered to lead the way, if he would send troops to a wrinkle in the hill which would partly shelter them until they were within close rushing distance. This was hardly the business of a correspondent; but whatever of patriotism or excitement was stirring others in that place of carnage had got into my blood too.

The general said that he would send men to

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

investigate, and presently he ordered Company F of the Twelfth Infantry to make a reconnaissance. Making my way to a mango grove at the foot of the hill, I saw Company F start up the wrong side—that is, the side toward the village and not the side our troops had silenced. A few moments later the company was driven back by volleys from the Spanish intrenchments in the village, many of the men wounded. The soldiers crowded behind the mango trees in the very vortex of a cross-fire. The leaves and bark were clipped from the trees by that appalling storm of bullets. Yet I could see some of them eating mangoes, and patting their stomachs, half-indifferent to their surroundings, in the fierce pleasure of that unexpected meal.

After a while, Captain Haskell, the acting adjutant of the battalion to which Company F belonged, a fine old, white-bearded veteran, came to where I was. He listened to the plan for the charge, and nodded his head approvingly. Gathering his men together, he indicated that he was ready.

We pushed our way through a line of low bushes and started up the hill to the fort. The

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

only weapon I had was a revolver, and the holster was slung around to the back, so that I should not be tempted to draw.

When I found myself out on the clear escarped slope, in front of the fort and its deadly trench, walking at the head of a storming party, I began to realize that I had ceased to be a journalist and was now—foolishly or wisely, recklessly, meddlesomely, or patriotically—a part of the army, a soldier without warrant to kill.

It is only three hundred feet to the top of the hill, and yet the slope looked a mile long.

Who will judge a man in such a moment? Who can analyze his motives? Can he do it himself, with his heart leaping wildly and his imagination on fire? There was the Spanish flag, a glorious prize for my newspaper. There was the trench and the dark loopholes and death. On all the hills were the onlooking troops, stirring the soul to patriotism. And away back in the past were scenes of Spanish cruelty and the wolfish Captain-general in Havana, telling me that I could never return to Cuba without forgiveness from Spain. Behind

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

me I could hear the tread of the soldiers as we crept, crept, crept—and then I lost courage and ran straight toward the trench, eager to have it over.

There was a barbed wire fence in front of the trench, a barrier to prevent charges. But it had never occurred to the minds of the Spanish engineers that the accursed Yankees—unsoldierly shopkeepers!—would think of carrying wire nippers in their pockets.

When I reached the fence I was within ten feet of the trench and could see dead hands and faces and the hats of the living soldiers crouching there. A scissors-like motion of the fingers indicated to Captain Haskell that men with wire nippers were needed. Two soldiers ran up and began to sever the wires.

As I stood there I could hear my heart beating. There was something terrifying in the silence of the fort. At what moment would the volley come? Were the Spaniards even now taking aim in those deep loopholes? Not a shot had been fired. It would come at once, and my body would go rolling down, down into the bushes at the bottom of the hill. No one

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

spoke. Snip! snip! went the nippers. A Spaniard in the trench thrust his face up for a moment and instantly shrank down again. Blood dripped from his mouth. I shall never, to my dying day, forget the look of agony and entreaty in that countenance.

It took but a few seconds to cut a hole in the fence and reach the edge of the trench. It was crowded with dead and dying men. Those who were unhurt were crouching down waiting for the end. A deep groan came from the bottom of the bloody pit.

A silent signal, and one of the soldiers who had cut the wire fence advanced and covered the men in the trench with his rifle. A spoken word and the cowering Spaniards leaped up, dropped their rifles and raised their hands in token of surrender. There was a pleased look on their haggard faces that took a little of the glory out of the situation.

In less time than it takes to write it, the trench was crossed and the open door at the end of the fort was reached. The scene inside was too horrible for description. Our fire had killed most of the garrison, and the dead and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

wounded lay on the floor in every conceivable attitude. A wail of terror went up from helpless men writhing in their own blood. Just inside of the door stood a young Spanish officer, surrounded by his men. His face was bloodless, and his lips were drawn away from his teeth in a ghastly way. Beside him was a soldier holding a ramrod, to which was fastened a white handkerchief,—a mute appeal for life.

The officer threw his hands up. He could speak French. Would he surrender? Yes, yes, yes!—do with him what we pleased. Did he understand that if his men fired another shot his safety could not be assured? Yes, yes, yes! and every Spaniard dropped his weapon.

I looked above the roofless walls for the flag. It was gone. A lump came in my throat. The prize had disappeared.

“A shell carried the flag away,” said the Spanish officer. “It is lying outside.”

Dashing through the door and running around to the side facing El Caney, I saw the red and yellow flag lying in the dust, a fragment of the staff still attached to it. I picked

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

it up and wagged it at the intrenched village. A wiser man would have refrained from that challenge ; but I was not wise that day. Instantly the Spanish intrenchments on the village slopes replied with volleys, and I ran, in a cloud of dust, to the other side of the fort, where our soldiers seized the captured flag, waved it and cheered like madmen. From every hillside came the sound of shouting troops as the torn symbol of victory was tossed from hand to hand.

Although bullets were beating around the door of the fort, Captain Haskell—who, with Captain Clarke, had kept the rifles of Company F busily employed—agreed to enter and assure the prisoners of their safety. We went in and, while we stood talking to the Spanish officer, I felt a stinging pain in the upper part of the left arm, as though a blow had been struck with a shut fist. The sensation was no more and no less than that which might have come from a rough punch by some too hilarious friend. It whirled me half around but did not knock me down. The next moment there was a numbness in the arm, a darting pain in the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

hand and a sharp sensation in the back — the arm hung loose as though it did not belong to me. A Mauser bullet, entering one of the loopholes, had smashed the arm and torn a hole in my back.

It is not necessary to describe how I staggered to a hammock in a compartment of the fort and lay there, hearing my own blood drip, how Major John A. Logan and five of his gallant men passed me out of the fort through a hole made by our artillery, and how I was carried down the hill and laid on the roadside among the wounded, with the captured Spanish colors thrown over me. After all, it was a mere personal incident in a well-fought battle, and hundreds of other men had suffered more.

Our troops were still fighting their way into the village, and we could hear the savage rip-rip-ripping of the rifles in the distance and hear the calling of the bugles.

Then an American flag was carried past us on its way to the fort and brave old Colonel Haskell, with bullet holes in his neck and leg, lifted himself painfully on one elbow to greet it. A wounded negro soldier, lying flat on his

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

back, raised his bloody hand to his head in salute. Bullets sang above the heads of the surgeons as they bent over the victims.

The heat was terrific. Things swam in the air. There was a strange yellow glare on everything. Voices of thunder seemed to come from the blurred figures moving to and fro. A horse twenty feet high stamped the earth with his feet and made the distant mountain tops rock. Little fiery blobs kept dropping down from somewhere and the world was whirling upside down. Some one was being killed? Who was being killed? Whose sword was lost? Why was that general standing on one leg and having all his buttons shot off? Copy! copy! an hour to spare before the paper goes to press!

Some one knelt in the grass beside me and put his hand on my fevered head. Opening my eyes, I saw Mr. Hearst, the proprietor of the *New York Journal*, a straw hat with a bright ribbon on his head, a revolver at his belt, and a pencil and note-book in his hand. The man who had provoked the war had come to see the result with his own eyes and, finding one of his correspondents prostrate, was doing

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the work himself. Slowly he took down my story of the fight. Again and again the ting-  
ing of Mauser bullets interrupted. But he  
seemed unmoved. That battle had to be re-  
ported somehow.

“I’m sorry you’re hurt, but”—and his face  
was radiant with enthusiasm—“wasn’t it a  
splendid fight? We must beat every paper  
in the world.”

After doing what he could to make me com-  
fortable, Mr. Hearst mounted his horse and  
dashed away for the seacoast, where a fast  
steamer was waiting to carry him across the  
sea to a cable station.

Before the sun went down the wounded men  
of Chaffee’s brigade and a few from the other  
brigades were carried on litters to a sloping  
field beside a stream, and there we lay all  
night under the stars, while Lawton’s division  
—having taken El Caney—moved on to join  
the rest of the army.

How peaceful the spangled blue sky seemed,  
so far above the blood-stained earth! Its quiet  
beauty reproached us. There all was order  
and harmony.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,  
That God alone was to be seen in heaven.”

What was the power that brought so many men together bent on mutual slaughter? Was it all foreordained in the law of the universe? and had we all been moving helplessly through countless ages, since the first impulse stirred primordial life in Eden, to meet at last as Spaniards and Americans, tearing each other's flesh and turning the fair green fields into graveyards?

Who that was there can forget the next day, when the Spanish sharpshooters who had escaped from the village tried for hours to kill the defenceless soldiers lying in our camp? Graves were dug and the dead buried before our eyes. And although the field was strewn with torn and shattered men, no sound of complaining was heard. There was something extraordinary in the stoicism of that place. The profound excitement seemed to lift the sufferers out of themselves, above the power of pain to unman. Not a groan. Not a whimper. The rain beat upon them. The terrible tropical sun made the fever leap in

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

their veins and dazzled their eyes. Again the rain soaked their blankets and again the sun tormented them. The bullets of skulking assassins hummed over them. Men gave last messages for their families. Men died. But not a sound of protest broke the silence. I saw more real heroism in that scene of pain than ever I saw in battle.

Vultures gathered around the camp and waited in the wet grass. Nearer they came, with hesitating, grotesque hops, watching, watching, watching. There was a horrible humor in the way they hovered near a splendid negro soldier who lay on the outer edge of the field, perking their ugly heads from side to side impatiently.

The wounded man slowly raised himself on his elbows and flinging a stone at the nearest vulture, he cried: "Gwan away. You're not goin' to git me. Wastin' yo' time, suh."

Then he rolled back and chuckled. Even in that place the deathless American sense of humor found its voice.

Late in the second night we heard the sudden sound of infantry volleying in the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

distance, and from our litters we could see the flashing of cannons in the direction of the San Juan slopes. Louder and louder the roar of battle swelled. It was the attempt of the Spaniards to dislodge the centre of our army from its position. But no one in the camp knew what was going on. Then the tumult died out, and silence followed. What had happened? Had our lines been broken? Were the Spaniards advancing upon us? Would they spare wounded men? Sick called to sick in the darkness. The sense of terror grew. All night we waited for news; all night in fever and silence.

At daybreak a messenger arrived, and a few minutes later the surgeon in charge of the camp went from litter to litter, announcing that he had been ordered to abandon the place at once and get to the rear. Any man who could stand on his legs must walk; there were only enough well men to carry the most desperately wounded.

“Have we been defeated, Doctor?”

“I don’t know. All I know is that we must move instantly.”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Alas! I cannot tell the story of that fearful journey. It can be better imagined. Some lived, some died. Looking back at that stumbling, fainting procession in the sour roads, the thing that stands out most distinctly in my memory is the pluck and patience of the wounded negroes.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Heroes of Peace and War*

TWO august scenes of national sorrow ! — the thunderous entombment of General Grant on Riverside Heights, with the reunited commanders of the North and South weeping over his coffin; and the burial of Mr. Gladstone in Westminster Abbey, the end of the most majestic period of English democracy.

As I look over my wrinkled note-books I seem to see again the glittering magnificence of these spectacles and to hear the thrilling outbursts of funeral music as the souls of two nations rise to their lips.

One vanished from sight like a god of war, with a shining sea of bayonets sweeping about his grave beneath drifting clouds of cannon smoke—the peace-compeller, at whose death-bed the greatest war of modern times really ended.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The other was laid in the earth to the sound of organ music, the greatest Englishman of the nineteenth century — a man who turned a monarchy into a democracy without shedding a drop of human blood.

---

LONDON, *May 28, 1898.*

The century which began with Napoleon and imperialism uttered its last note in the twilight of Westminster Abbey with Gladstone and democracy.

They took the great commoner of England from the vast-vaulted hall, built by the son of William the Conqueror, and bore him in state through mighty multitudes in Parliament Square, laying him under the solemn arches of the old abbey, among the bones of his enemies, while princes and dukes, earls and marquises, counts and barons, the Prince of Wales, and all the upholders of the proud aristocracy which he stripped of power, were gathered at his burial.

Early in the morning the Lords and Commons assembled in the House of Parliament and marched silently into Westminster Hall,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

where the body of Gladstone, in a plain oaken box made by the village carpenter of Hawarden, lay among huge flaring candles, under the carved beams of the giant roof that once looked down upon the trial and death sentence of Charles I. and the ordeal of Warren Hastings, the plunderer of India. Each of the parliamentary bodies was led by its sergeant-at-arms, bearing a golden mace.

The Earl Marshal and the heralds of the British Empire drew near, and when the Bishop of London had uttered a prayer, the oak box, covered with a pall of white and gold, was lifted from the black platform on which it had rested in state for three days, and the great procession of Lords and Commons, privy councillors, royal magistracy, and all the bright heraldry of Great Britain, moved slowly outward.

On one side of the dead leader of England's democracy walked the Prince of Wales, the Marquis of Salisbury, Mr. Balfour, the Duke of Rutland, and Lord Rendel; on the other side walked the Duke of York, Lord Kimberley, Sir William Harcourt, Lord Rosebery, and George Armistead.



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

As far as the eye could see, the people of London were gathered, bareheaded and silent. The sky was leaden, and a gentle moisture dropped down from the clouds, but no man covered his head.

In spite of the immensity of the crowd and of the pressure from all the streets leading into Parliament Square, the stillness of the scene was like the hush of a sepulchre. You could see the eyeballs of the people as they moved, but you could hear no sound as the simple funeral car was borne slowly forward.

That silence, that immobility, that unutterable reverence of the common multitude in the open air was the greatest tribute of the English people to England's greatest statesman. Shrill, headlong London was suddenly struck dumb.

Within the gray old abbey the sound of trombones and the deep, rich tumult of the organ mingling in Beethoven's Funeral Equale — then Schubert's funeral march in D minor and Beethoven's glorious funeral march — sounded the approach of the procession.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The mighty nave was crowded with men and women, princesses, peeresses, wives of ambassadors, actresses, leaders of every rank and fashion. And rising above them gleamed the sculptured white forms of the heroes, statesmen, and philosophers who made the British Empire.

Another silent company of distinguished spectators sat in the transept and choir before the great altar, with its dim gold carvings and the dusty shield, helmet, and saddle of Henry V. hanging in the shadowy air.

In the south transept rose huge tiers of seats for the Commons, hiding the hallowed tablets of the Poets' Corner, and in the north transept, built over the age-stained monuments of dead prime ministers, were tiers of seats for the Lords.

The ancient pavement of the abbey was covered with dark blue felt, and at one side —O Death, thou leveller!—about six feet away from the statue of Lord Beaconsfield, was the open grave—a deep cavity, coffin-shaped, lined with black cloth and rimmed with a thin line of white. Three strips of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

brown canvas tape were stretched loosely across the opening, ready for their burden.

In the aisles on either side of the north transept, behind the iron railings, were crowded the newspaper men of almost every civilized country, among them the editors and writers who supported Mr. Gladstone in all his later battles for the people.

There was a hush. The vast audience arose. Mrs. Gladstone, wrinkled and trembling with age and sorrow, leaning on the arms of her sons, Herbert and Henry, advanced to a seat in front of the chancel railing, where she knelt and bowed her head in prayer, while every eye and every heart regarded her.

Suddenly the whole vast space resounded with music. Louder and stronger and richer it swelled against the hoary columns, while the venerable banners hanging over the tombs of kings and conquerors swayed as the waves of sound rolled forth; but still Mrs. Gladstone remained on her knees. It echoed from chamber to chamber,—the graves of mitred saints, the ashes of murdered princes, the dim tomb of Mary Queen of Scots, the faded

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

shrine of Edward the Confessor—and swept crumbling walls carven with the crimes and glories of a thousand British years.

Once more there was silence. Again the audience stood up. This time it was to honor the Princess of Wales, who entered clad in deep mourning. Even Mrs. Gladstone involuntarily rose to her feet as her future queen approached, the widow humbling herself in the subject; and again the thrilling organ tones mingled with the crashing brasses.

White spears of light thrust themselves through the lofty windows, save where through the painted glass came the soft radiance of crimson and yellow and green and blue. Far up toward the gray roof appeared eager faces swarming in the sculptured openings and fantastic swirls of the triforium.

The ponderous western doors swung open, and into the old abbey surged the Commons, preceded by the great gold mace and the Speaker in his resplendent robes. On they came, shuffling and jostling, four abreast, the witnesses of Gladstone's triumphs and defeats. And as they moved into the end of the tran-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

sept and settled into their seats, the aged privy councillors, preceded by heralds, and the House of Lords, led by the little, red-faced lord chancellor in his mighty wig, and followed by his bewigged clerks, advanced solemnly to the gallery erected for the peers.

Then came Sir Robert Collins, representing the Duchess of Albany; Colonel Collins, representing the Marchioness of Lorne; Lord Monson, representing the Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha; a group of grave men, representing the monarchs of Europe, and much bedizened with gold lace; and then Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, the grizzled old Duke of Cambridge, and the Duke of Connaught, and their jaunty equerries.

Meanwhile, the canons and clergy, arranged according to their rank, in white and black and scholastic scarlet, moved with a great choir of boys gathered from the royal chapels into the chancel and the space in front of the altar.

And now came the body of the greatest of Englishmen, borne aloft on the willing shoulders of his humble followers, with the little

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

black-whiskered Earl Marshal of England strutting before it, and the future king and emperor, the prince minister, the heir ultimate to the throne, and the other distinguished pall-bearers trudging along on either side, their hands lightly holding the white and gold pall.

Behind them walked Garter King-at-Arms, with his glittering baton, and the other heralds; then the Rev. Stephen Gladstone, Herbert Gladstone, Henry Gladstone, Miss Gladstone, Mrs. Drew, little Dorothy Drew, William Glynne, and Charles Gladstone, the dead man's little heir. With them were a group of villagers from Hawarden, a clumsy, bashful, emotional following, overwhelmed by the mighty spectacle before them.

When the casket was laid in front of the shrine, the scene was suggestive beyond the power of words.

To the right of the altar stretched, row on row, the huddled House of Commons, and on the left were assembled the Lords of England, Ireland, and Scotland, with the lord chancellor, in his wig, sitting in the front row, the gold mace and great seal on the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

table before him. On either side of the pavement surrounding the open grave, were Lord Chief Justice Russell, John Morley, Lord Spencer, Mr. Bryce, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and the other living members of Gladstone's famous ministries. At the altar was the dead leader and his weeping widow; behind them the ambassadors and ministers of nearly every nation on earth.

As the choir sang, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," the Prince of Wales bent tenderly above the venerable widow in the soft candle-light. He touched her shoulder gently, and whispered words of comfort.

The Commons looked across at the Lords, and the Lords looked down at the open grave of the greatest foe of their order since Cromwell. The grim white statue of Lord Beaconsfield, in his carved robes and chains of office, rose triumphantly beside the Lords, a companion to the rosy Lord Chancellor, in his wig, presiding over the nothingness of heredity.

The hand that had dragged privilege down and lifted humanity up was powerless to do more; the voice that had called manhood to

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

power in England was stilled forever. Ah! well might the little great Lord Chancellor, perk in his gorgeous robes, and the Lords look down upon that grave with dry eyes! Democracy incarnate was about to disappear in the earth of which it was born, the ashes of its mightiest leader to become a part of the common dust of London.

Then there came to the head of the ancient altar stairs the white-haired Dean Bradley, and behind him the Archbishop of Canterbury, the pope of England. After the choir had chanted "Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another," and "Turn Thee again, O Lord, at the last, and be gracious unto Thy servant," the venerable dean read the lesson.

The casket was carried over to the grave, while the choir and audience sang "Rock of Ages," to the accompaniment of the organ and the band. It was the hymn Gladstone had turned into Latin.

Mrs. Gladstone tottered over between her sons Herbert and Stephen, and took her seat at the head of the grave. It was the only chair in the place. Around the grave were grouped

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the Prince of Wales, Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery, the Duke of York, and the other pall-bearers, together with the relatives and servants of the Gladstone household. Lord Salisbury's huge form towered up beside his future king, his shaggy head covered with a black skullcap.

While the great multitude sang “Praise to the Holiest in the Heights,” Mrs. Gladstone stood up and moved her head feebly to the music. Her lips and hands trembled, while under her veil could be seen her pale face, wet with tears.

There was another pause. The great abbey was suddenly silent. Gladstone was gently lowered into his grave, and the voice of the Archbishop of Canterbury was heard in the final prayer of the burial service—shrill, harsh, far-reaching.

The supreme moment had come. Mrs. Gladstone knelt on the black floor and leaned far over, with a loving cry, as if she would drop into the grave herself. Tears ran down Lord Salisbury's rugged face, the Prince of Wales wiped his eyes, and the sound of sobbing was heard on every side.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Suddenly there was an outburst from the choir, soft, high, and sweet—"Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth evermore."

It filled the vast building with rapture; it reached from the wife, kneeling among the great of the earth, to the husband lying in the bottom of the pit.

The archbishop pronounced the benediction, and Mrs. Gladstone was lifted to her feet by her two sons. She swayed to and fro, half fainting, but presently she drew herself up erect, and when the audience sang "O God, our Help in Ages Past," she smiled, and raised her eyes.

And now came a touching scene. As the men, women, boys, and girls of the Gladstone family pressed around the grave, the Prince of Wales, the Prime Minister, and the other great officers of state drew back reverently. Mrs. Gladstone took Dorothy Drew by the hand and pointed into the grave. Then she took Gladstone's little heir and, again pointing to the bottom of the grave, she whispered something to him that no one could hear. She did not

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

point to the future King of England or the Prime Minister or the princes. She did not direct his boyish gaze to the Lord Chancellor, sitting high among the peers behind his ponderous mace of gold. She bade him look into the grave of the man who would not accept a title and yet came to be greater than them all.

Garter King-at-Arms, stepped lightly to the side of the grave and, in a voice that echoed throughout the abbey, proclaimed the civil status of Gladstone, and named the offices he had filled.

Little need for the College of Heralds to tell the Lords what he had done who lay between those oaken boards! The glory of his life shone through half a century of English history, eloquent and useful through all history to come. Rather was tinselled heraldry honored by the opportunity to speak at such a grave.

Presently the Prince of Wales approached Mrs. Gladstone, and all made way for him as he stooped down, and, taking her hand in his, kissed it. Lord Rosebery kissed her face.

That was all. That was the whole story. The Lords and Commons, the princes and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

privy councillors, the ambassadors and all the greatnesses and littlenesses of England trooped out of the gray abbey into Parliament Square, where the assembled people of London were still standing, silent and motionless.

Gladstone's real funeral was out there in the open air. The common people were shut out of the abbey, but in their minds were the blind stirrings of the passion for equality invoked by their great leader, a dim sense of that peaceful future he would have led England to, out of her bloody past.

“And when this fiery web is spun,  
Her sentries shall descry afar,  
The young Republic like a sun  
Rise from these crimson seas of war.”

---

NEW YORK, *August 8, 1885.*

A hot yellow stretch of newly levelled earth, a fringe of green boughs, a little hill, and, beside it, a small brick vault with a gilded cross; vast, murmuring multitudes covering the landscape—and on a wooden platform, close to the empty tomb, the writer of these pages—then a young newspaper reporter), overwhelmed by

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the majesty of the impending burial of General Grant in the chief city of the nation he had saved.

Below was the shining Hudson River, and, beyond, the rich green mountains sloping down to the steep gray palisades. Through the trees a fleet of warships with glistening masts lay in the stream, and white sails drifted up and down. White tents stood under the green boughs on the brow of the river bank.

Every hilltop was covered with the multitude. Men and boys climbed the trees and hung on the branches. Every valley swarmed with life. Every rock and every stump was fought for. Monstrous white, wooden stands rose from the level masses, and upon them were seated thousands and thousands of spectators.

Away down the winding road up which the funeral cavalcade was to come were miles of men and women, hot, faint, and weary. Mountains and valleys of umbrellas rose and fell in all directions under the fierce blazing sun.

Suddenly there was a crash, and the crowds reeled as the hills sent back the thunderous announcement of the warships that the dead

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

conqueror was coming up from the black-hung, breathless streets of New York. Clouds of cannon smoke whirled up from the burning decks and the streaming pennants danced in the rigging. All other sounds were swallowed up as sheets of fire and smoke burst from the black gun-ports.

After a few moments the crowds down the roadway moved convulsively, and as they swept backward a line of mounted policemen galloped past. Behind them came General Hancock, in an open carriage, at the head of his staff. A billow of gold lace and white and scarlet plumes rolled after him into the hot square of levelled earth. In the midst of it could be seen General Gordon, of Georgia, who was left for dead on the field by Sheridan's cavalry, and General Fitzhugh Lee, the Southern cavalryman. Slowly they rode past the tomb, and halted their horses on the hill beyond, under a clump of trees, a brilliant patch of color. General Hancock got out of his carriage and walked into the brick vault, where he stood leaning upon his sword for a long time beside an empty steel casket.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Along the road came the regular troops at a swinging march. Artillery, cavalry, marines, and bluejackets moved up to the hill on the right of the tomb. Bugles sounded from all sides, the steady tramp of feet shook the earth, furled banners stood out of the ranks at all angles; steel flashed and brass shone. Miles and miles of soldiers and sailors poured around the hill. The swaying, heaving stretches of armed men grew more gorgeously brilliant as the colors mingled, and the sunlight sparkled on thousands of bayonets.

Magnificently caparisoned horses, with handsome gold-sashed officers, swept about the yellow earth in front of the tomb. The glitter of steel in rising and falling ranks, and the moving masses of colored plumes and gold embroideries intensified the splendor of the scene. Waves of color swam before the eyes.

The dull roar of the cannons on the river, the hoarse clamor of the distant bells of the city churches, the mournful confusion of dirges played by military bands far and near, the shrieking of a thousand steam whistles, the harsh clashing of arms, and the noise of gal-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

loping horses' feet—these were the sounds that swelled on the summer air as the victor of the greatest war in history approached his grave. It was as if the voices of a hundred battlefields had gathered in the throat of the whirlwind.

Near the tomb stood General Hancock, surrounded by the principal officials of New York. A poor negro approached and took off his hat. The general waved his soldiers back from the door, and the negro entered the shadowy vault humbly, reverently. There were tears in his eyes.

Now was heard the distant roll of drums, and instantly the bayonet-lined square yawned with excitement. Horses and riders, flags and banners, were grouped in front of the close ranks of blue and yellow and scarlet and white that fell back and back with ripples of bayonets until the eye could see no farther. Nearer and nearer came the sound of the drums, and the lines of bayonets became straight and rigid.

Under a moving cloud of dust a line of carriages came in view. They were the pall-



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

bearers—the generals of the Northern and Southern armies. As the carriages entered the shining, brilliant square, the pall-bearers alighted and stood for a moment motionless. The great multitude watched them with emotion. General Sherman gave his arm to General Johnston; General Sheridan gave his arm to General Buckner. Then a hush fell upon the scene as the soldiers who fought each other twenty years before walked arm in arm to the tomb. A spirit of softness began to steal into the place. Through the air swelled a rich, sad chorus from somewhere under the hill, and slowly a great, swaying, plumed darkness came into view, with a dark blue square of musicians in front and lines of bayonets on either side.

It was the funeral car. Great, deep chords of music swelled from every side, and all the troops presented arms. As the car drew nearer the multitude uncovered. The older men were crying. A few white-haired veterans knelt in the hot sand and bowed their heads. Still on the river the crash of the cannons made the air tremble. Rank after

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

rank of soldiers wheeled into the road behind the tomb and joined the silent, shining mass of color that covered the northern hill. The long line of black horses that drew the car seemed to creep.

Then out of a quarter of a mile of carriages came President Cleveland, Vice President Hendricks, and a host of governors, senators, generals, representatives, and men famous in every walk of life. Colonel Frederick Grant came with wife, and behind him were his brothers Jesse and Ulysses, with their wives and children. Little Julia Grant carried a wreath bearing in purple the single word "Grandpapa." Nellie, the toddling brown-haired favorite grandchild of the great soldier, held a tiny sheaf of wheat. The two children seemed to be bewildered by the splendor of the spectacle.

There was a pause. Then the white-faced guard of the Grand Army ascended the black steps of the car and lifted the purple casket. They bore it to the ground, and laid it in the waiting brown shell with tenderness while the bands played solemn dirges.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Now the scene became majestic. On either side of the fallen commander stood the pall-bearers. Sherman and Sheridan looked into the eyes of Johnston and of Buckner. Johnston's venerable face trembled with emotion, and Buckner folded his arms upon his broad chest, while the sun beat hotly down upon his snowy head. A few feet away, former President Hayes and former President Arthur stood together.

No pen could touch the depth of that spectacle. The history of a wonderful quarter of a century was represented there. Whole legislatures from widely separated states were mingled together. Men without whose names the history of America cannot be written, watched the great soldiers of the North and South reunited over the corpse of the foremost warrior of the continent.

Beyond the bareheaded crowd of officials were the glittering troops, and in the river the warships still thundering their salutes. Overhead the bright summer sky. The band at the tomb played a sweet, plaintive psalm, and away over the hills came the chanting of other bands mingled with the steady beating of drums.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Then a long line of veterans, white and black, scarred and lame, feeble and strong, filed past the tomb dipping their tattered battle-flags. A new sound of thunderous artillery was heard as the army artillery belched forth the presidential salute.

And all around it was the silent bareheaded multitude, countless stretching out until its lines were lost in the blurred distance.

The Grand Army men drew closer to the body of their old comrade, and began their rites for the dead.

“God of Battles!” cried the commander, “Father of all! amidst this mournful assemblage we seek Thee with whom there is no death.” The rest was a confused murmur ending in a loud “Amen.” A wreath of evergreen was laid upon the purple casket, a spray of white flowers was cast beside it, and last of all, a crown of laurels.

Then a bugler played an army call, and all was silence. Stern old Bishop Harris advanced and read for a few minutes under the shade of an umbrella. Parson Newman, Grant’s pastor, repeated a portion of the Methodist burial service.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The end approached. A regular army trumpeter strode forward to the foot of the purple casket and began to play "Lights Out," the last call of the camp. As the sweet notes swelled forth, a tear rolled down the bugler's face, and the music faltered for a moment. Sherman's head fell upon his breast, and he cried like a child. Sheridan covered his face with his hand, and tears stood in Johnston's eyes. The stern lines of Buckner's countenance broke, and he trembled; but still the bugler blew his plaintive call for ears that were deaf, and when he ceased the multitude was in tears.

Peace, silent soldier! Johnston and Sherman are friends to-day. Sheridan and Buckner have shaken hands. The grim face of Gordon looks down from yonder hill in sorrow. War in thy hand, but peace in thy mouth!

Colonel Grant and his family moved to the casket. The children threw their flowers on it and crept backward. Poor little ones! They hardly seemed to realize their loss as they clung to their parents and listened to the throbbing music while the body was lifted up and borne into the tomb.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The door of the little vault closed with a clash ; the key was turned and handed to General Hancock.

General Johnston looked around at the crowd, but could not see a familiar face. Then he walked slowly to the only friend he seemed to know, and leaned upon the shoulder of General Sherman. General Buckner shook hands with General Hancock. Johnston lifted up Grant's favorite grandchild and kissed her before the crowd.

Away they went from the shadow of the tomb together. Not as of old, but softly, tenderly, lovingly. Oh blue ! Oh gray !

The Seventh Regiment turned about and faced the river, and three volleys of smoke and flame swept over the steep bank. The Twenty-second Regiment turned about and fired three volleys more. The guard was mounted, the dark crowds moved, the cannons were silent, the bands were hushed, and the bells ceased tolling. The tomb of Grant was now the shrine of a reunited nation. The last lingering bitterness of the Civil War had vanished.

## CHAPTER XII

### *A Talk with Kossuth*

**I**N old Turin, where the rough Alps are flung against the sky around the cradle of Italian liberty, I found Louis Kossuth in the twilight of his life. The once emancipator of Hungary sat before a table in a large bare room with a rug around his legs to protect them from the winter draughts, and a black silk skullcap on his snowy head. Books and papers were scattered about him. A bedraggled bird fluttered restlessly in its wooden cage in a sunny corner. A furled and faded flag was the only note of color in the room.

Nearly a quarter of a century had passed since Victor Emanuel and Cavour had invited the unsuccessful Washington of Hungary to live in Italy. Here the man who uncrowned the Emperor of Austria and drove the mighty Metternich from power had sat year in and year out, speaking with few outside of his household,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

watching the driftings of nations, marking the rocks in the way, and reading and writing prodigiously.

He had lived to see all his idols shattered, all but that great republic across the Atlantic Ocean, which greeted him like a hero and honored his defeated flag when Europe closed its doors to him. But even in his exile, with the weight of eighty-eight years upon him, he still earned his own living by the pen, scorning all assistance, although offered even by the royal master of Italy.

A strongly built man with a broad forehead framed in curling white hair, earnest blue eyes, a firm mouth, and a hoary, untrimmed beard that almost touched his deep, full chest; yet there was a suggestion of old sorrows in his gentle face.

“You see a man without a country,” he said, as he welcomed me and bade me be seated. “Yes, it is a fact; Louis Kossuth is an alien in his native land. Ten years ago a law was passed providing that any Hungarian who failed to appear before a representative of the Austrian crown and declare his allegiance within ten years, should lose his nationality. That time

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

expired two weeks ago, but see!" — he pointed to a heap of parchment scrolls on the uncarpeted floor — "eighty-three cities of Hungary have already conferred honorary citizenship on me. So the American newpapers want to invade the sepulchre of the old man who was foolish enough to dream of liberty in the heart of monarchical Europe?" The blue eyes twinkled. "They want to know what I think of the German Emperor's international congress for the settlement of the question of capital and labor? Well, I don't think much of it."

The man whose army was once the hinge of Europe drew the rug about his knees and pushed his gold-rimmed spectacles up on his forehead, as he settled back in the well-worn easy-chair.

"The German Emperor's words are only words," he said. "But he is a young man, and he is no doubt sincere, for it has been the hereditary policy of the Hohenzollern princes to found their power upon the masses of the people, rather than upon an aristocracy. However, congresses of nations do not amount to much, and congresses of kings are not to be trusted.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Kings take little interest in the affairs of the common people, except when they happen to coincide with their own plans.

“As for the present sovereigns of Europe, their personal interests are so antagonistic that it will be impossible for them to agree on the labor question, even if it were solvable. Monarchies, to exist in the present time, must extend themselves, and no king can set any limit on his power such as an international compact regulating the relation between capital and labor.

“Two ideas are advanced by the German Emperor. One is that the nominal hours of labor shall be fixed by law; the other is that workingmen shall participate in the arbitration of all labor questions. Already the principle of industrial arbitration is in partial operation, both in England and America. But the scheme for regulating the hours of labor throughout the world is no more practicable than a common system of popular education for all countries. Differences of temperament, of physique, and of capacity, added to differences of surroundings and climate, create a barrier that cannot be levelled.”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

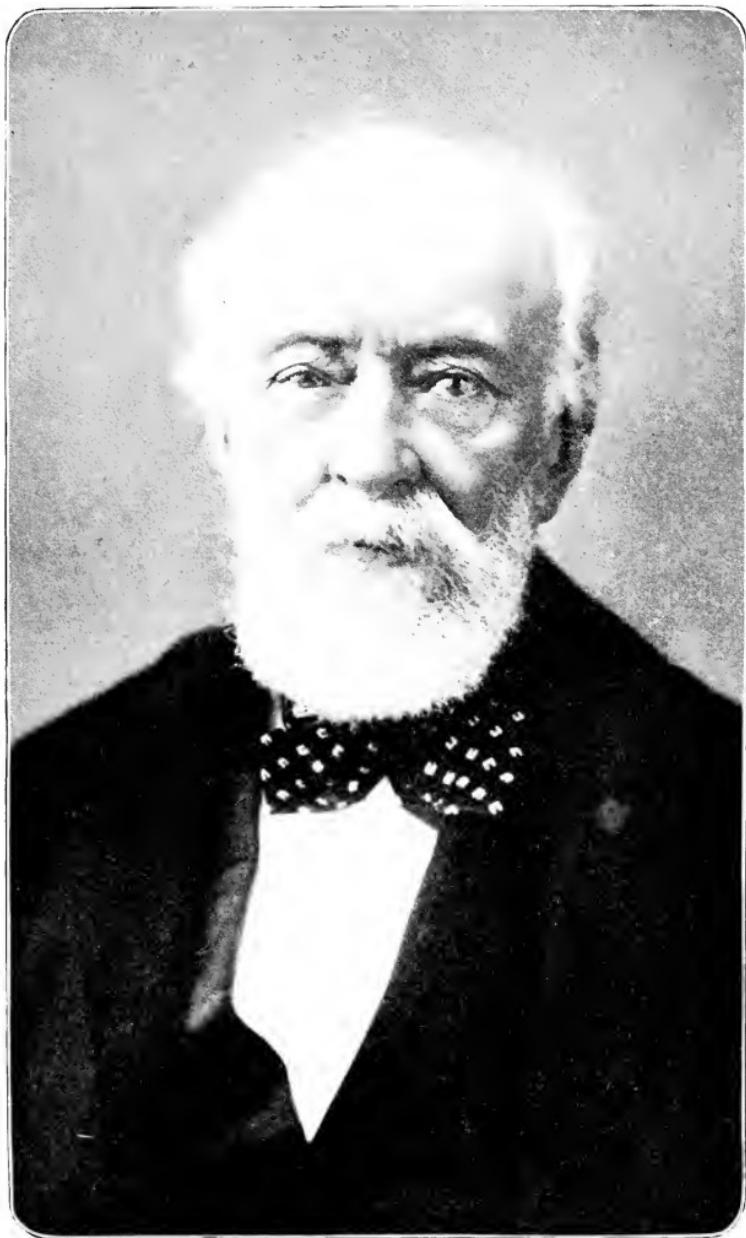
---

The old leader shook his head and wagged his forefinger as Italians do when they dissent.

"It must be clear to a statesman who has eyes that the social-industrial question overshadows all others," he said. "The human race is sick of a malady that defies cure. The progress of civilization has given to the great mass of the people desires which were once confined to the few, and each workingman to-day regards as necessities what his predecessors considered luxuries. That is a fact which the political doctors do not seem to be able to recognize. They ignore the multiplying tastes and appetites which make the standard of the basis of life a changeable thing.

"The so-called state socialism will not cure the sickness from which society is suffering. An equal division of property or of labor will be followed in time by an unequal possession of property and an unequal distribution of labor. The weak will always go down before the strong. It has always been so in my time, and it always will be so.

"Monarchy will not cure the malady. Monarchy is going down all over the world, and



*Louis Kossuth*



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

republicanism is going up. The monarchical principle is not extending itself, while the principle of republicanism is rapidly gaining ground. The bloodless change of Brazil into a republic shows that. History proves that when one system ceases to extend itself and an opposing system keeps on growing, the contracting system is bound to be displaced.

“But republicanism will not cure the malady either, for you have in America the nearest possible approach to a real republic, with an enfranchised democracy, free education, and popular institutions—and the social-industrial sickness is there too, increasing with your wealth, with your education, and with your liberty. There seems to be no remedy.”

Kossuth drew himself out of the chair and sat upon the table.

“Meanwhile,” he said, with a smile, “the earth will continue to revolve, and some day the present population may be swept from its surface, and a new race, capable of a new civilization, may appear. A cataclysm offers the only hope of a solution.”

“That is a black doctrine to come from a

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

man who once preached the gospel of hope to Europe," I suggested.

"Yes; but I have lived a long time, and I know more now than I used to know. Time is a stern teacher, and a true one. This appeal for an international system of labor regulations"—and the old man slipped back into his chair again—"is simply the reassertion of the ancient doctrine that government must meddle in everything, help everything, and control everything. The idea is discredited by history and by the present condition of the working people. It will not do. There must be more scope for man; the individual must have room to develop. If the people cannot help themselves, governments are powerless to help them.

"Much of the poverty of Europe is due to the expense involved in large standing armies. They will not disappear until the monarchs, with their personal ambitions, disappear. Europe is slowly approaching the verge of a vast conflict; it is inevitable. Nothing can avert it. The only cause for surprise is that war has not already begun.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Now see how this curse of overgrown armies came upon Europe." Kossuth pressed his thumbs together as though he held the problem between them. "When Poland in her dying agony called to the world for help, those who espoused her cause were laughed at as idealists and sentimentalists. What did the world care about the liberties of the Poles? What did it matter whether the little kingdom was divided up among the great powers or not? Well, let us see what that injustice and that indifference to the rights of a weak nation have brought to Europe; let us trace the punishment from the crime. The importation of negro slaves into America finally resulted in a great civil war in which nearly half a million men died, and imposed a gigantic war debt on the United States, the interest of which must be paid by many generations. As Emerson says, 'the dice of God are always loaded.' The downfall of Poland gave the Czar a window overlooking Europe. Russia turned her eyes toward Constantinople. The Czar became ambitious in European affairs. The Russian movement toward Constantinople and the Medi-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

terranean Sea threatened to upset the balance of power in Europe. It was seen when the Czar invaded the Sultan's dominions that Russian pan-slavism would soon stretch around Austria an arm strong enough to crush that heterogeneous and naturally weak empire. The Germans dreaded such an event, for that would bring the Russian power on two frontiers of their territory. And so the Triple Alliance was formed; Italy joining Austria and Germany because of her fear of France. All hope of relieving Europe of the curse of militarism disappeared. Armies grew greater each year. France allied herself to Russia. Each combination of nations watched the other with jealous hatred. More expensive weapons were invented. The war taxes multiplied. To-day the situation of the people who have to pay for all this is almost intolerable.

“But if we had succeeded in maintaining the independence of Hungary”—the venerable face was radiant with the thought—“our first act would have been to go to the assistance of Poland and reëstablish her government. That would have been followed by a Danube alli-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ance of small states, united only for common defence, each preserving its separate independence. This would have given Europe a buffer between her frontiers and Russia. It would have settled the Eastern question.

“Hungary was crushed because she got no outside help. Washington at Valley Forge acknowledged that he was *hors de combat*, and France went to his rescue. Where would Wellington have been but for the support of Teutonic arms? But Hungary will yet be free. The Hungarians have preserved their nationality for a thousand years. They deserve liberty, and some day, somehow, they will get it.

“I look around me here in Italy and feel that she is safe. The Italians deserve a great and happy future. They have been true, so long and through so many bitter trials, to the principle of Italian unification. When the thread of patriotic conspiracy fell from one man’s hands on the scaffold, there was always another to take it up. The Vatican casts a shadow on the throne of Italy, but it is a small shadow. Had the College of Cardinals

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

been adroit enough to have elected to St. Peter's chair a member of the Royal House of Italy — King Humbert's brother, for instance — they might have changed the situation. But the Papal kingdom is a thing of the past, and no one understands that better than the present Pope. As a great writer has said, 'The temporal sovereignty of the Pope is the dead body of the Holy Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.'

"England is a waning power. She is living on the capital accumulated in the past, and is rapidly using it up. Canada and Australia are sure to be separated from the mother country, and not a drop of blood will be shed to retain them. There will always remain ties of language and similarities of institutions that will encourage intercommerce and be mutually profitable. The two colonies have ceased to be a source of strength to England from a material standpoint. India is her great treasure-house. Had Lord Beaconsfield lived and carried out his plan of using Indian troops in Europe, England would be to-day a mighty force.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Your country is the one power that is steadily gaining strength. Your greatest danger is your wealth. When nations become very rich they lose their energy and gradually drift away from their moral ideals. But if the experiment of self-government does not succeed in the United States, it cannot be successful anywhere. The American republic started under conditions never equalled in history. It had an intelligent, hardy, virtuous citizenship, loyal and homogeneous. It had an almost virgin continent, abounding in natural wealth. It had the experience of other nations for a guide. It was not embarrassed by an aristocracy, or by pretenders to a throne, or by an ancient system of vested rights. It was protected from European invasion by three thousand miles of salt water. That was the beginning, but what will the end be? When your men grow rich, and you have a leisure class, will they be satisfied with the plain ways of a democratic republic? Yet, God forbid that harm should come to the United States, the hope of mankind in the future!”

When I rose to go, Kossuth went to the door

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

with me, walking slowly and with some effort. He drew the rug about his legs, and shivered when the wintry air touched him. As he stood there with bowed head and trembling limbs, he was a picture of noble old age.

“I suppose,” he said, “that when you were instructed to interview me, you were surprised to know that Kossuth was still alive? Well, I ought to have died years ago, when my work was finished. I am ashamed to be using the air that belongs to more useful creatures.”

He said this with an air of profound sadness.

“Your work finished?” I said. “It will never be finished while men live.” And I quoted Smollett’s lines :—

“Thy spirit, Independence, let me share ;  
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye,  
Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,  
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky.”

“Ah!” sighed the old man, “I am tired of the storms. If I could choose my place in nature, I would choose to be the dew, falling noiselessly, trampled on by man and beast, unnoticed and unappreciated, but still silently blessing and fructifying the earth.”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

I repeated these words to Count Tolstoy, in Russia, a few months later. He was silent for a moment; then he said,—

“I would much prefer to be a man, and love men.”

## CHAPTER XIII

### *The Czar on his Knees*

ON that dark, stormy day when the Czar's English nurse died in the Winter Palace, I was in St. Petersburg, and I remember well how the wet snow fell from the blotched sky, and the wind whistled up the frozen Neva.

Wherever I went in Russia there was always present in my mind the figure of Alexander III., as I once saw him riding at the head of his cuirassiers — an arrogant giant on a great black horse, towering above his soldiers, the incarnation of brute force, splendid and terrible. But I was yet to see the human nature hidden under that glittering helmet and breastplate.

The Czar was with his ministers when a messenger went to the Anitchkoff Palace to tell him that his nurse was dead and that her last words were of him.

Through the dull, harsh nature of Alexander

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

there ran one stream of tenderness — love for his English nurse, “Kitty,” she who had mothered his boyhood. A more unimaginative monarch never sat on a throne. Lacking the sensitiveness of his father, he governed Russia pitilessly, although with a sense of honesty. But in the sternest hours of his iron reign his sluggish heart melted at the sound of one voice.

And she was dead. The autocrat of all the Russias went alone through the storm to the darkened room in the Winter Palace where his dead nurse lay awaiting the grave with peaceful upturned face and folded hands. The giant threw himself upon her body with a great cry, and, as he laid his head upon the cold bosom, the attendants withdrew and left him alone with his woe.

He lifted the frail form in his arms and carried it tenderly to the coffin. No hands should touch her but his. Then he arranged flowers about her head and kissed the still, white face until it was wet with his tears. For a long time he knelt there with bowed head, and when he came out of the hushed chamber there was a

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

look in his face that no one had ever seen there before.

A whisper went about St. Petersburg that the Czar had ordered that none but himself and his brothers should keep watch over "Kitty's" coffin.

For the next two days the dashboards of the sleighs in the Russian capital dripped with slush. It rained and snowed alternately. While I sat one afternoon in the American Legation overlooking the river, with Mr. Charles Emory Smith, the American minister,—looking through wreaths of tobacco smoke at a rude family of Laplanders, exhibiting their reindeer on the ice of the Neva,—I heard more about the burly Czar and his sweet-faced English nurse.

Alexander was the second son; and, while his elder brother, the heir to the throne, was alive, the big, awkward boy was neglected. Little attention was paid to his mind. He was trained as a soldier, so that he might some day command the Imperial Guard. Even then he was the favorite child of the English nurse, and his sullen nature responded to her touch.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

While the favored brother prepared himself to reign over Russia, and studied the principles of law and government, Alexander studied the soldier's task — to destroy. He was known as the most powerful Russian of his age. His strength and his dull, overbearing manner inspired fear. None of his companions dared to challenge that rough temper and heavy hand. He was the natural soldier — silent, domineering, fearless ; quick to obey established authority, and harsh in command. In time he grew to be a giant, and it was said that he could kill a man by a single blow of his fist.

But to the dear little Englishwoman who taught him how to walk and how to pray, he was always "Sarsha," — the Russian diminutive of Alexander,— and to him she was always "Kitty." Even when he came home from the Turkish war, a successful general, he sought her out before all others. Lifting her up in his arms, he looked down into the pale face that had smiled upon him through all the loneliness of his gloomy boyhood, and then he passionately kissed her.

"What do you think of me now, Kitty?"

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

he cried. "Have I satisfied you? Are you ashamed of your boy?"

"Ashamed? Ah!"—and she leaned her head on his mighty breast, shedding tears for pure joy—"you are a brave soldier, Sarsha, and a good son of your father. God be praised for all our victories! I am proud of you."

The burly soldier gave her a hug that she often spoke about, for even then he was known as one of the strongest men in Europe, and his hug was not always a joke. So great was the strength of his hands that he one day rolled up a silver plate and gave it as a souvenir to the German Emperor, who had begged him to display his muscles.

And when he learned, long after his brother's death, that his father had been assassinated, he went straight to his nurse and laid his head upon her shoulder like a child.

"Oh, Kitty! dear Kitty!" he sobbed, "they have killed my father! They have killed my father!"

She put her arm about his neck and talked

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

to him in the old nursery tone, and presently he was comforted.

"Your Majesty must trust in God," she said gently.

"Your Majesty?" — and he stroked her head tenderly — "I am not an Emperor to you, Kitty. I am simply Sarsha, your boy Sarsha ; always Sarsha. And you are Kitty, always, always Kitty. I will have it so, and I have now the right to command, you know."

Ah ! would that her influence had followed and controlled him in the cruel years that were to come ! How many homes might have been saved from ruin, how many lives might have been spared, how many hearts remained unbroken ! Would that she had stood beside him, with her simple virtues and quick sympathy, when Loris Melikoff appealed to him to grant a constitution to the people of Russia ! The history of Europe might have been changed. But it was not to be.

There was little to be known about the life of the Czar's nurse. She was a quiet, shy woman, rarely seen outside of the magnificent Winter Palace where she lived — a patient, soft-voiced

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

subject of Queen Victoria, modifying and subduing the hard nature of the man who lived to be her country's most dreaded enemy. But although her name is not enrolled among the Czar's advisers, she was one of the hidden forces that swayed the man whose lightest breath meant war or peace for the whole world. How many such influences lie concealed along the track of human progress, beyond the ken of history? How many loving women have spun their kindness and mercy into the mantles of majesty, unwept and unsung of the world?

While I sat there looking out over the dismal snows of the Neva and listening to tales of the autocrat and his nurse, there was a sudden stir in the street below the window, and excited men and women began to swarm along the edges of the road. A mounted cossack in a streaming crimson mantle galloped along the way, shouting directions to the policemen who kept the crowd back. His swarthy face was full of emotion. Evidently something extraordinary was about to happen. Even the Laps on the river ice left their reindeer and ran to join the multitude.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Just then the chasseur of the legation—a blond whiskerando in gold lace and gorgeous plumes—hurried into the room, in a state of agitation unprecedented in the history of that august person, and saluted the American minister.

“Your Excellency,” he exclaimed, with rolling eyes and upraised hands, “the Emperor is coming along the quay on foot. He is actually walking behind the hearse. It is true. He will not ride. He is on foot—the Emperor himself.”

Then turning to me:—

“Now you can see for yourself whether the Czar can go out among his people or not.”

I fear that the desire to see the curious spectacle made me forget my host. I rushed downstairs only to find that the crowd in the street had grown so great that nothing could be seen from the rear but a flashing crucifix swaying above the murmuring people and the fluttering plumes of the hearse.

“You must go in a sleigh to another street,” said the chasseur. “You must not miss the sight, or you will never believe it.” He seemed

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

to be overcome with anxiety lest the American writer should lose the chance of seeing the master of the mighty Russian Empire trudging along on foot behind the coffin of his nurse.

"Hurry! please hurry!" he urged. "The Emperor carried the coffin to the hearse with his own hands. You will see, to-day, what a true man sits on the throne of Russia."

Calling an *istvostchik*, I jumped into his battered sleigh and promised him two rubles if he would get me around through a back street in time to see the head of the cortège.

Presently I stood in the crowd on the slush-covered quay and saw the solemn procession pass slowly on. First came the bearded Greek priest and the crucifix; and behind him walked several black-robed men carrying lighted lanterns on poles. Then came the little hearse. Behind it strode Alexander and his two brothers through the sodden snow, while the crowd made the sign of the cross. A few knelt down and touched the snow with their foreheads in the Eastern fashion.

The Czar towered above his brothers, a heavy gray coat buttoned closely about his

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

giant figure, and his cloak flapping in the cold wind. A turban of gray astrakhan wool with a white aigrette covered his great head, and spurs jingled on his heavy boots. The three brothers walked side by side, the Czar in the middle. His face was pale, and his eyes showed that he had been weeping. Several times he seemed to stumble. I stood within ten feet of him, and could see that he was profoundly moved. Not once did he look away from the hearse which was carrying his English foster-mother to the grave.

Behind the Czar walked a group of Kitty's personal friends, mostly women, and among them — so some one said — several members of the imperial family. After them came a line of carriages with the well-known imperial livery. Every carriage was empty. The mourners were all on foot. A few mounted soldiers closed up the train.

Not a note of pomp violated the simple pathos of the scene. The autocrat was simply a man walking humbly and reverently after the corpse of the serene little woman who loved him. The sound of a tolling bell came faintly

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

through the white drizzle. The Czar bowed his head. My rough *istvostchik* leaped from his seat and, kneeling in the snow, began to pray. A hoarse murmur ran from mouth to mouth: "The Emperor!" "Sarsha!" "It is he! It is he!" But the sorrowful monarch looked neither to the right nor the left. The blurred heavens grew darker, and the wind sifted the snow over the plumed hearse. The voice of the priest could be heard.

Oh, little gray English nurse! God has given it to some women to level all things by love!

It was a long way to the cemetery, but the Czar walked the whole distance. He sat in a pew of the Church of England for the first time, and watched the coffin at the altar railing.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die."

The autocrat was on his knees, crying like a child. Kitty! Kitty! dost thou hear? dost thou see? Tears! tears for thee, Kitty!

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

I saw him again just before he entered the cemetery, his great face wet with weeping, and his head bowed. And while they lowered the coffin into a gap in the frozen ground, the keeper of the cemetery laid a piece of carpet — the only thing of luxury in his house — at the feet of his imperial lord, and the Czar sank to his knees.

“Catherine, servant of God — ”

The Czar could go no farther. He crouched there with the snow falling on his bare head until the grave was filled up. As he turned away he looked back at the little mound and crossed himself. The lamp that lit his early feet was extinguished.

“ Two lives that once part are as ships that divide  
When, moment on moment, there rushes between  
The one and the other, a sea ; —  
Ah, never can fall from the days that have been  
A gleam on the years that shall be.”

## CHAPTER XIV

### *Greeks on the Verge of War*

**I**N Athens for news—Athens, which slew Socrates, built the Parthenon, and began the policy of democracy centuries before Christ was born. But the crumbling ruins of the age of Perikles were of little interest to those who were in Athens when Greece defied Turkey and the six great powers of Europe for the sake of the Christians in the island of Crete, bravely fighting against their Turkish oppressors. The commonplace little capital of Greece, which lies among the fallen temples of the gods, echoed with the shoutings of Greeks hurrying from the remotest parts of the earth to fight under the Danish king placed on the Greek throne by united Europe. A spectacle of national folly, perhaps, but imbued with a depth of sentiment rarely felt in these sluggish days of commercial Christianity.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Not only were the Greeks in the cities arming themselves for the approaching conflict, but the goatherds and swineherds poured down from the classic mountains, rifles in hand—Parnassus, Helikon, Pelion, Ossa—and the shepherds of old Thermopylæ abandoned their flocks on the rough hillsides and marched over the graves of heroes in the ancient pass where Leonidas died, shrieking defiance to Islam and the concert of the powers. And the railway trains that rattled over the plains of Thessaly, where Persephone gathered flowers, were assembling an army at Larissa in sight of the snowy summits of Olympus and the rocky Vale of Tempe.

not a  
moment

What a strange commingling of bloods was in that sudden flaming of national passion; old Greeks, new Greeks, Slavs, and Albanians blended together by ages of intermarriage. In the midst of it all, King George, the Dane, commanded to peace by the great nations which placed the crown upon his head, and urged to war by the mighty Pan-Hellenic society, whose secret organizations controlled the army and public sentiment.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

It was only when I talked to the King that I fully understood the heartlessness and brutality of the concerted powers — that august council of the most powerful military states which determines the destinies of Europe and Asia ; that Christless, conscienceless power which fired on the Greek flag in Crete and allowed a Mohammedan army to ravage Thessaly.

There was something that made the blood run cold in the sight of that silent Turkish host in Macedonia, supported by the Christian nations of Europe, waiting for their officers to give the signal for an advance ; while on the other side of the mountain range that divided the two armies, the Greek herdsmen marched down the mountain sides in their goat-hair cloaks, chanting ancient war songs, and dancing the pyrrhic, as they advanced over the blooming Thessalian fields to fight for Greece and Christianity.

It is the fashion of modern writers to assume that the international policy of the world has reached a high plane of sentiment, and that the old dominion of brute force has given place to a generous chivalry based upon moral feeling.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

But the year 1897 discredits this theory. The King of Greece intervened to prevent Turkey from landing an army of extermination in Crete. The situation in the island was appalling. Driven into insurrection by the murderous cruelty of the Turkish soldiery, the Cretans had almost won their independence, and the Mohammedan troops were confined practically to four coast towns. Twenty thousand Greek subjects were involved in this struggle. More than three-quarters of the population of Crete were Christians, related by blood, language, religion, and habit to the Greek nation. Even the great powers were forced to take notice of the infamies perpetrated in the island by Turkish officials, and had threatened the Sultan, who gave combined Europe permission to establish such reforms in Crete as they might think necessary. But the great powers did nothing. The egoism of international control having been flattered by the submission of the Sultan, the dominant statesmen of Europe congratulated each other upon the diplomatic victory, and allowed the awful conflict in Crete to go on.

For nine months more Turk and Cretan con-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

tinued to burn and slay. Gradually the little army of liberty drove the Turks before it. The independence of Crete was in sight. Then the Sultan ordered a new army to sail to the island and annihilate the Christian forces. The great powers had the right to prevent the threatened massacre, but refused to act. The King of Greece begged the governments of Europe to use their influence and authority, but in vain. It was not convenient. The concert of the powers — which had witnessed unmoved the wholesale massacre of Christians in Armenia — was not to have its tranquillity disturbed because a few thousand Christians were to be slaughtered in Crete.

Christian Europe was too busy with tariffs and other commercial matters to waste any thought or effort on the struggle of an ancient people against merciless oppression. Europe had spoken once to the Sultan, and the Sultan had replied politely. What more could be expected? These Greeks were a troublesome people — always making a row about freedom and human rights generally, and interfering with the comfort of the European concert. So



*King George of Greece*



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

London, and Paris, and St. Petersburg, and Berlin, and Vienna, and Rome set their faces hard against the Greeks ; and even the voice of Gladstone, on his death-bed, failed to arouse the conscience of the nations.

It was then that King George of Greece sent a torpedo flotilla, in command of his son Prince George,—the hero of the nation,—to prevent any Turkish force from landing in Crete, and at the same time he despatched a small army, under the command of Colonel Vassos, to occupy the island in the name of Greece. There is not a more gallant incident in history.

Instantly the statesmanship of the great powers was wide awake. The German Emperor stormed. The Czar raved. London and Paris roared with anger. Rome and Vienna joined in the outburst of indignation. The concert of the powers had been insulted. Greece had dared to go to the rescue of the Christian army in Crete without the permission of Europe.

There was no languor now. An international fleet of warships surrounded Crete, and Colonel Vassos was informed that his army would be

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

starved out unless he surrendered. All the mighty forces of the nations which had refused to be aroused by the death-cries of Christianity in Crete were put into action to punish the contumacious Greeks, for liberty and justice must ever wait on the convenience of the European ministries. The spirit of the threatened Greek commander in Crete was illustrated by his refusal to yield even to combined Europe, unless his king should order him to do so, and by this cabled message, which he sent to a New York newspaper:—

“ Americans well know the Holy Alliance of old which attempted to enslave the republics of America. A modern Holy Alliance is attempting to enslave Cretans under a government beyond the pale of modern civilization. I am sure the sympathy of Americans will be with the efforts of Greece to rescue her own people.

VASSOS.”

Meanwhile the pickets of the Turkish army in Macedonia and the Greek army in Thessaly stood in the Mylouna Pass within three hundred feet of each other. A single shot would

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

have produced war at any hour of the day or night.

There was much to see in that old country of the Greeks. The dapper little military dandies in the cafés blew dainty wreaths of cigarette smoke, and talked about the conquest of Constantinople. The students of the university made speeches on the steps of the palace, menacing the leagued nations of Europe with the righteous anger of the Greek race. The leaders of each political party denounced the leaders of all other parties as liars and scoundrels, but all agreed that Greece was capable of vanquishing the Turks even in the teeth of hostile Europe. Featherheads! They bore the great traditions of their past as a dilettante of the Paris boulevards might stagger under the armor of Charlemagne.

It was not among the people of the cities that the substantial patriotism of Greece was to be seen. Other nations have had this experience, but the Greeks in their mightiest days were a people of independent and militant cities. I heard the multitudes of Athens scream for war and sweep through the streets

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

half-crazed behind their garlanded flags. But in the country districts I saw the Greeks of Marathon and Thermopylæ, the men who made Greece the mistress of the world—sturdy shepherds, willing to fight in their goatskins and content with a crust of bread and a cup of water; pure lovers of the soil for its own sake, uncouth, innocent of politics, and full of faith in their king.

“Ah, there is no people like the Greeks!” said King George, when I interviewed him in the palace. “They have come from the remotest parts of the earth to serve their country. The old blood is in their veins.”

The slender, graceful Dane stood in the middle of a vast chamber, dressed in a modest blue uniform.

“The men who are marching past the palace at this moment are Greeks from the Caucasus, whose ancestors have lived there for more than a century. Seven hundred of them have returned to Greece at their own expense to fight for her. Where can you find another nation like the Greeks? They are poor, their country is small, and their army is a mere fragment,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

yet they are willing to face the whole of Europe in arms."

There was a look of sadness in the pale face of the unhappy monarch. His nephew, the Emperor of Russia, had turned against him. His brother-in-law, the future king of England, had refused to say a word in his favor. The guns of the nations which had placed the sceptre in his hands menaced his army in Crete. The Turkish forces which threatened the frontier of Thessaly had behind them the moral support of every powerful Christian state. Yet the Greeks threatened to rise against a king who dared to yield to the powers.

"There is nothing more cruel or insensible to humane sentiment than the European concert," he said. "I talk to the newspapers now in the hope of moving the hearts of civilized peoples, because the combined governments are deaf to the voice of justice. The world has never before witnessed such a spectacle as six powerful nations, acting in the name of Christian civilization, surrounding an island with their warships, and starving a noble Christian people, whose only offence is that they have fought for liberty.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

While doing this, these nations are feeding and upholding the savage Turkish oppressors."

The lines in the King's face grew hard, his big brown eyes flashed, the veins stood out with painful distinctness on his temples, his lip trembled, and his voice shook with emotion.

"But the Greeks are unafraid. They are prepared to make any sacrifice, and no loss can be too great for them. They will fight barefooted, they will fight without food, they will fight even without hope; and if this conflict with Turkey begins, they will not cease until they have achieved victory, or the last fighting man has fallen."

How the infuriate crowds pressed around the plain little modern palace, with its guard of mountain warriors in starched white kilts! How the young orators were held up on the shoulders of their friends to shriek grandiose speeches against the great powers and dizzily rant about the past glories of Greece! How Greek priests in black hoods waved flags on the palace steps before the eyes of the frenzied patriots! And Greeks returned from France and Italy and America, and every land under the sun joined in

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

that bewildering clamor for war. Even while a dead Greek prelate was borne through the streets uncoffined — after the laws of Solon — the cry for blood was in the air.

Yet who could help loving that warm-hearted, childlike people, and pitying them as they swarmed in the very shadows of the Acropolis? — for the Greeks of old cast their spears into the sky only to have them return covered with blood. But there were no gods now to warn them of impending fate. The heart of ancient Greece was there in that rabble, if not her conquering strength. It was hard to think that these little men in modern clothes were the descendants of the heroes who made the Greek name feared throughout the world, that this was the Athens which inspired Byron. And it was all the more impressive to a writer fresh from vigorous young America, rising into world-wide power, to hear the passionate cries of an impotent but proud people on the very ground where their ancestors won unperishable renown, in sight of the supreme monuments of their departed greatness. Here Phidias reared the matchless statue of Athena, of which not a

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

fragment remained. Here art and literature flourished, and the mind and soul of man burst into blossom. Here Solon lived, and Perikles and Socrates and Plato and Demosthenes. Every foot of the ground had been trampled by the feet of generations of conquerors. To this triumphant seat of learning and valor thousands of pilgrims came to study art and philosophy and war. Here were laid the enduring foundations of civilization.

The old blood was working in those shrill crowds, the old passion was there, but the old power was gone. Athens was the joke of European courts and the sorrow of all true lovers of the Greeks.

A Greek troop-ship crowded with army recruits carried me from the Piræus to Volo, the naval base of the King's army in Thessaly. As we touched various ports on the way, hundreds of herdsmen wearing sheepskins and goatskins came on board with their rifles. Soon the decks were packed to their utmost capacity. Educated Athenians who had entertained me in the fashionable hotels only two days before, lay on the rough boards among

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

herders of swine. No Greek shrank from the uniform of a private soldier. There was a light-hearted enthusiasm in this scene of picturesque squalor that surprised me. Aristocrat and peasant met on equal terms. Each new band of fighting herdsmen was welcomed with shouts of joy. Now and then some excited mountaineer would discharge his rifle in the air, whereat all would sing defiance to the Turks. At the ancient city of Chalkis the armed shepherds formed circles on the shore and danced the pyrrhic to a slow chorus, that well remembered preparation of the Greeks for battle.

In the beautiful Bay of Eubœa lay the torpedo squadron commanded by Prince George, the idol of the Greek people. I boarded his flagship, the *Canaris*, with Mr. Horton, the American consul at Athens. The prince was a blond, blue-eyed giant.

“We will fight the whole world, if we must,” he said; “but we will never make a cowardly surrender to a Mohammedan power. As for me, I am a sailor. I have nothing to do with politics. I obey the King. The King’s word is my only law.”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Little did I think then that I was looking upon the man who was to be chosen by Europe as the reigning Prince of Crete. As we sailed away on the troop-ship into the Gulf of Atlanta we could see the sailor prince towering above his crew like a young war god, and as he tossed his cap in the air there burst from the squadron a fierce roar of farewell that could be heard on the distant shore, beyond which loomed the august white summit of Mount Parnassus.

After landing at Volo we travelled by train over the plain of Thessaly to Larissa, where twenty thousand Greek soldiers were massed. It was a scene of excitement. Here officers were drilling the rough shepherds and goat-herds, there Prince Nicholas was exercising his battery of artillery; smart troops marched and countermarched in every direction; groups of conspirators from Macedonia and Epirus noisily discussed the approaching war in the streets; jaunty officers in new uniforms drank wine in the restaurants, and loudly boasted of coming victories; the kilted mountain soldiers danced the pyrrhic in their camps — grim ballet, presaging death.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

In the distance could be seen the mountains that separated the two armies, and to the east of them, the majestic white peaks of Olympus, rising beyond the wonderful Vale of Tempe. On the other side of the mountains, not more than twenty miles from Larissa, was assembled the army of Edhem Pasha, the Turkish commander-in-chief in Macedonia.

The gray-haired Greek general who commanded the forces at Larissa assured me that the Turkish army was a mere ragged mob, badly armed and insubordinate. The Turks were deserting in large numbers, and Edhem Pasha was in despair. The moment the Greek army crossed the frontier tens of thousands of armed Christians would rise against the Sultan. The conquest of Macedonia would be a matter of two or three weeks.

Mounted on a half-starved pony, and accompanied by a photographer, I rode into the famous Mylouna Pass, through which the Turkish army entered Thessaly a few weeks later. The pass was guarded by two hundred white-skirted mountaineers who spent most of their

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

time dancing the pyrrhic and singing war songs. The officer in command, a stalwart, black-bearded Greek, declared that all the Turks in the Ottoman Empire could not force the pass.

"But you have no artillery in here," I said.

"Artillery is not necessary," he said. "The pass is narrow and difficult even for the feet of mountaineers. There are two hundred of us—all Greeks. My brother was killed by the Turks in the next pass only a few years ago. That is why I am in command here. I will avenge him."

His black eyes glittered with hatred. His nostrils spread as he spoke, and his breast rose.

"You don't know the Greeks," he said. "You are an American. But these hills know them. Stay here with me when the fight begins, and you will see what Greeks are like in battle."

A few weeks afterward the Turks buried him and most of his command almost at the very spot where we stood.

We pushed on through the age-worn and broken paths in the pass until we reached the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

highest point, which was the frontier. The Turkish and Greek sentries paced slowly before their guard-houses within speaking distance. The moment we crossed the line that divided Greece from Turkey we found ourselves prisoners, with a stout Mohammedan soldier at each bridle rein. In this fashion we descended over the rocks to the Macedonian plain and rode to Elassona. Our escort was very rough, and refused to allow us to speak to the peasants we met.

Once in the camp of the Turkish field-marshall, all was changed. A vast army was spread out on the northern edge of the plain, and white tents dotted the hillside as far as the eye could see. There was a gravity and silence about it all that meant much to a man accustomed to soldiers in the field. The contrast to the Greek camp was startling. There was no singing or dancing, no shouting, no wine-drinking, and no boasting. I never saw finer troops, nor more perfect order in an army.

Edhem Pasha was absent from his headquarters and I was received by the next in command, Memdouh Pasha, the redoubtable

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

soldier who assisted Osman Pasha in the defence of Plevna. He was a short, square-headed little man, with a close-cropped beard and honest eyes. He reminded me strongly of General Grant. When I presented myself, he introduced the Turkish war correspondent of a Constantinople newspaper, who spoke French and acted as our interpreter.

The Turkish general had food set before me—for hospitality is a law of the Mohammedan church—and presently, when I had eaten, he curled his legs under him on a rough divan, lit a cigarette, offered one to me, and blew rings of smoke in the air. At that moment I saw my photographer's camera seized by a soldier; but Memdouh, by whose orders the thing was done, looked pleasantly into my eyes.

"How did you leave the Greeks?" he said. "What were they doing when you came away?"

"Singing and dancing and preparing to fight."

Memdouh blew another ring into the air, and watched it ascending to the ceiling. There was a look of deep peace in his eyes.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“To fight?”

“Yes.”

“Do you think they can fight?”

“They have given some convincing proofs of their power to fight in the past.”

Another ring of smoke. How intently the soldier regarded the trembling circles as they floated upward!

“The past! The Greeks of the past are all dead. The people you have been visiting are light-headed. They are degenerates. If the great powers let us alone, we will settle our difficulties with Greece forever. They will conquer and govern us, or we will conquer and govern them. The Greeks are singing of war, but wait till the first battle opens, and see how they will sing then. We are ready to advance at a moment’s notice. The spirit of Islam is in our army, and you know what that means. The newspapers and amateur politicians of Europe speak of Turkey as a sick nation; but you have never heard a soldier who has faced our infantry in battle indulge in that sort of talk.”

The general settled himself more cosily on

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

his divan, and rolled another cigarette. There was something very impressive about his quiet, confident manner.

"You had better stay with us if the war begins," he suggested. "It will be safer in our lines, and you will see how good, fighting Turks handle themselves."

"I am afraid that I would never get my despatches through to my newspaper. Turkey is not benevolently disposed toward the press."

Memdouh laughed and showed his teeth. "You are a close observer," he said. "The Greeks like to be advertised, and therefore they will help you to get your news to your journal. Well, you can stay with them if you prefer, but you will have to describe a defeat."

"I have never been with a defeated army yet."

"Then you are about to enjoy that experience."

A walk through the Turkish camp was convincing. The vast columns of infantry, the wheeling squadrons of Circasian cavalry, the long lines of Krupp field-guns, the immense

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

stores of ammunition and food, the abundance of horses, the splendidly organized signal service, with its field telegraph equipment, and the noiseless order of the place spoke plainly enough. The Turks had little to say. They are a naturally reticent and sober people. They bore themselves like trained soldiers. There was nothing of theatrical sentiment to be seen. All was plain, useful, and business-like. I asked an artillery officer how the Turkish people felt about the approaching struggle. He read me an extract from a letter written to him by his brother, a schoolboy :—

“I can bear the news of your death on the field better than I can bear the news of a Turkish retreat. If you must choose between death and flight, dear brother, turn your face to Heaven.”

The officer showed great emotion as he folded the little sheet of paper and thrust it back into his pocket.

“If Turkish boys can write like that,” he said, “you can imagine how Turkish men feel.”

The arrival of a London correspondent in

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Elassona sent a chill down my back. I had been the first correspondent to cross the frontier and enter the Turkish lines. That fact in itself was an important thing for newspaper headlines. But now I was face to face with a rival who would undoubtedly claim the credit unless I reached the telegraph station at Larissa before him. Mounting my tired pony I started back to Greece. The Englishman saw the point, and also made for the frontier. He was mounted on a good cavalry horse and easily distanced me on the plain, but when we reached the Mylouna Pass he was compelled to dismount and lead his horse over the masses of broken rocks while my ragged pony moved over the debris with the skill of a mountain goat. The sun set, but the starlight was brilliant, and I passed my rival at the frontier.

The ride down the other side of the pass at night was a thrilling experience. When the foot of the pass was reached, the pony fell to the ground exhausted.

No other horse was to be had. My rival was moving somewhere behind me. The mud

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

was deep, and twelve miles stretched between me and Larissa. I started to walk across the Thessalian plain alone. For an hour I plodded in the sticky road, listening to the howling of the savage shepherd dogs that roamed the darkness in all directions. Gradually the dogs drew nearer, snapping and snarling as they approached. Presently I found myself surrounded by the hungry brutes, and could see them running on all sides. I tried to set fire to the grass, but it was too wet. The dogs were within twenty feet of me. Then I heard the sound of footsteps and of voices. The dogs retreated. My blood ran cold. Was my rival about to find me in this ridiculous position and pass me? I started to run toward Larissa, but before I had gone two hundred feet I was overtaken by two Greek soldiers in starched skirts, who had been sent by the officer of the guard in the pass to protect me on my journey. I tried to find out if my rival had emerged from the mountains, but they could understand nothing but Greek.

“Englishman! Ingleskee! Angleskee!” I yelled in despair, making pantomime descrip-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

tions of my rival's beard and eyeglasses. They shook their heads and laughed.

The walk to Tyrnavos gave me a new insight into the Greek character. As we moved forward my companions rapturously watched the stars which shone with startling brightness through the clear air. Nowhere in the world do the stars seem as close to the earth as in Greece. The atmosphere is singularly pure. And several times the soldier on my right touched my shoulder and silently pointed to the beautiful Greek sky. I could not understand his hushed sentences, but I knew he was telling me that the stars belonged to Greece.

At Tyrnavos we got a carriage, and I reached Larissa at one o'clock in the morning, splashed with mud from head to foot. My rival had found a telephone at the frontier, and had sent a message for London; but he was not present to plead his cause, and the sight of my travel-stained garments softened the heart of the telegraph superintendent so that the wire, which was conveying messages into King George's sleeping room, was interrupted long enough to send my message to America.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The Turks forced the Mylouna Pass and swept Thessaly clean. Everybody knows the story of that international tragedy. Neither King George nor his generals would believe it possible that Mohammedan soldiery could conquer Christian Greece. The combined powers of Europe gave their countenance to the great crime, trampling justice and sentiment into the dust. And when the bloody deed was done, when Greece was broken and humbled, when the vanity of the powers was satisfied in Greek blood, Europe acknowledged the justice of the Greek cause by making Prince George the reigning Prince of Crete.

“The concert of Europe cares nothing for principles or human life when its dignity is at stake,” said King George, when I saw him again in Athens.

## CHAPTER XV

### *Sitting Bull*

THE dirty brown blanket that hung on the shoulders of Sitting Bull revealed a figure of impressive strength, and the snaky boldness of the dark eyes that shone under a low, slanting forehead bespoke the master mind of the fighting savages of North America — priest, doctor, politician, woodsman, warrior.

There was an inexpressible dignity in the strong face of the old chieftain, as he stood there on the prairie, with one moccasined foot thrown lightly forward, while the weight of his sinewy body rested solidly on the other foot. The stained feather which fluttered in his braided black hair, the red and yellow paint smeared on his cheeks, and the gaudy girdle of porcupine quills and beads seemed trivial and out of harmony with the eagle nose, straight, powerful mouth, and the general sense

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of reserved power, which expressed the born commander of men.

There he stood—the mightiest personality of a dying people whose camp-fires were burning in America before Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem—native America incarnate, with knife and tomahawk and pipe, facing a strippling writer from a New York newspaper, and telling the simple story of his retreating race. To measure the progress of civilized man, it is only necessary to meet a savage like Sitting Bull, to whom the names of Homer, Socrates, Moses, Galileo, Bacon, Shakespeare, Dante, Michael Angelo, Beethoven, Alexander, Cromwell, and Napoleon were meaningless sounds. Imagine a man born on the American continent who never heard of Columbus or Washington or Lincoln! Not a man whose ancestry was debased and stunned by ages of slavery, but the descendant of free people, the heir of a continent teeming with riches.

This man was born thousands of years after Athens and Alexandria and Rome were built; yet he had roamed over the rich prairies, and the soil, his greatest heritage, had never spoken

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

to him of the treasures germinating in its depths. Listening for the sounds of approaching conflict, he had not heard the voices of the unborn wheat and corn that were yet to conquer him and his ways. He was able to move a whole nation to battle, but a compass or a watch or a telegraph instrument or a newspaper was a mystery that baffled his imagination. The scribblings of the correspondent, which he regarded with disdain, suggested nothing to his mind of the irresistible power of publicity, that conqueror of armies and dynasties and civilizations. To him it was mere foolishness.

But there was one thing which he had learned, a thing that linked him with the greatest minds of all the ages—the value of human liberty. Before that simple prize the wonders of science, literature, and art shrank into insignificance. It has been my lot to meet and talk with most of the great men of my own time, and I have observed that after all was said about methods and policies, the supreme goal of all sane effort was freedom. The noblest minds in all human history have finally come to Sitting Bull's rude creed. The painted

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

nomad, ignorant of Luther, Bruce, Hampden, Washington, Kosciuszko or Toussaint, knew the supreme lesson of history — compared to which other human knowledge is unimportant — that nothing can compensate men for the loss of liberty, and that everything else can be endured but that.

I had paddled down the muddy waters of the Missouri with Paul Boynton, the adventurous traveller, who spent his time floating along the rivers of the world in an inflated rubber suit. The great Sioux war was over, and I had sat in the peace council at Fort Yates, where three thousand surrendered Indians were camped on the plain, and heard the great fighting chiefs turn orators. The story of Custer's last charge and his death was on every tongue. When Sitting Bull marched across the British frontier and yielded his warriors as prisoners of war, he was told that President Garfield would receive him in the White House at Washington, and hear from his own lips the grievances of his people. But Garfield had fallen, and was in his grave. President Arthur refused to allow the savage who was responsible for the slaughter

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of Custer and his men to go to Washington. Sitting Bull was sullen and revengeful. Warned by signs of discontent and restlessness among the young fighting men, the military authorities removed the angry old chief and his family to Fort Randall, hundreds of miles farther down the Missouri. There I found him with army pickets guarding his little camp of thirty-two tepees, around which Indian braves, squaws, and almost naked children sprawled in the sunlight.

Following Sitting Bull to his tepee, I crawled after him through the covered hole which served as a door. We were joined by Allison, the famous white army scout, who acted as interpreter, and by a number of Indians, who entered at the request of the old chief. We seated ourselves on the ground around a heap of burning twigs, Sitting Bull sitting at the head of the circle. He threw aside his blanket, under which he wore a fringed shirt of deerskin. The two wives of the household shook hands with us, giggled, and paraded several half-nude and very dirty children, the heirs of the family.

There was silence in the tepee. Sitting Bull



*Sitting Bull*



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

laid his tomahawk and knife on the ground, and began to fill his long pipe with tobacco and killikinick, the dried scrapings of willow bark. No one spoke. The chief looked at the fire, and took no notice of us until he had puffed at his pipe for a few moments. Then the pipe was passed around, and as each man smoked, Sitting Bull watched his face closely. When the ceremony was ended, the old leader gazed at the pink and violet flames flickering among the broken fagots, and pursed his lips. The wrinkles on his forehead grew deeper, and a look of shrewdness came into his dark face. Aboriginal America was about to utter its thoughts to the millions of men and women who brought gunpowder and Christianity from the continents beyond the seas. The chief put his thumbs together, as though he were comparing them — an odd trick that I have noticed in other Sioux politicians — and began.

“I have lived a long time, and I have seen a great deal, and I have always had a reason for everything I have done,” he said, in a deep, low voice — still staring thoughtfully into the fire. The listening Indians nodded their heads.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Every act of my life has had an object in view, and no man can say that I have neglected facts or failed to think.”

He took a long pull at his pipe, and as the smoke glided from his lips he watched it musingly.

“I am one of the last chiefs of the independent Sioux nation,” he said; “and the place I hold among my people was held by my ancestors before me. If I had no place in the world, I would not be here, and the fact of my existence entitles me to exercise any influence I possess. I am satisfied that I was brought into this life for a purpose; otherwise, why am I here?”

O ye men of books! Trace back that thought to the oldest writers until your searchings end in the mists of Mesopotamia and Asia, and see if there be anything in the ancients or moderns with a more tidal sweep of logic than the utterance of this unlettered North American savage.

“This land belongs to us, for the Great Spirit gave it to us when he put us here. We were free to come and go, and to live in our own

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

way. But white men, who belong to another land, have come upon us, and are forcing us to live according to their ideas. That is an injustice; we have never dreamed of making white men live as we live.

"White men like to dig in the ground for their food. My people prefer to hunt the buffalo as their fathers did. White men like to stay in one place. My people want to move their tepees here and there to the different hunting grounds. The life of white men is slavery. They are prisoners in towns or farms. The life my people want is a life of freedom. I have seen nothing that a white man has, houses or railways or clothing or food, that is as good as the right to move in the open country, and live in our own fashion. Why has our blood been shed by your soldiers?"

Sitting Bull drew a square on the ground with his thumb nail. The Indians craned their necks to see what he was doing.

"There!" he said. "Your soldiers made a mark like that in our country, and said that we must live there. They fed us well, and sent their doctors to heal our sick. They said

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

that we should live without having to work. But they told us that we must go only so far in this direction, and only so far in that direction. They gave us meat, but they took away our liberty. The white men had many things that we wanted, but we could see that they did not have the one thing we liked best,—freedom. I would rather live in a tepee and go without meat when game is scarce than give up my privileges as a free Indian, even though I could have all that white men have. We marched across the lines of our reservation, and the soldiers followed us. They attacked our village, and we killed them all. What would you do if your home was attacked? You would stand up like a brave man and defend it. That is our story. I have spoken."

The old chief filled his pipe and passed it around. Then we crawled out into the sunlight again. As I was about to leave, Sitting Bull approached me.

"Have you a dollar?" he asked.

"I have."

"I would like to have it."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

When the silver coin was produced the chief thrust it into the bosom of his shirt.

“Have you another dollar?”

“Certainly.”

“I would like to have that, too.”

I gave him a second coin, which also disappeared in his shirt.

“Tobacco?”

A bag of fragrant birdseye followed the money.

“Ugh!” said the old man.

When I got into my canoe to resume my voyage down the Missouri, the chief came to the water's edge to see me off. He was dressed with some show of rough splendor, and was accompanied by his two fighting nephews. As I looked back I could see him standing on the gravel shore, his countenance as void of emotion as a bronze mask. It was the face of old America, unreadable in victory or defeat.

A man like Sitting Bull brings one face to face with original human nature. There was cruelty and cunning in him, but like Lord Bacon, the greatest philosopher since Plato,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

he was the product of his ancestry and surroundings. Bacon confessed, as Lord Chief Justice of England, that he had accepted bribes, but he asked his country to judge him by the official usages of that time. Sitting Bull slew innocent men and women, but he could point to the moral standards of his race for justification. Like Phocion, who saved Greece from the Persians, the Sioux leader had fought for his race, but unlike Phocion, he had not sat at the feet of Plato and Diogenes. He was not poisoned and thrown on alien soil for burial when he counselled peace for safety's sake, but he drank of the hemlock of defeat, and was killed in a brawl by a policeman.

---

Before many days my little canoe reached Fort Hale, and the next day I rode with the post surgeon over the prairie to the Crow Creek Indian Agency. We pricked gayly along a narrow trail on nimble ponies, and the man of medicine led the way, occasionally bursting into song:—

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Oh Jean Baptiste ! pourquoi ?  
Oh Jean Baptiste ! pourquoi ?  
Oh Jean Baptiste ! pourquoi you grease  
My little dog’s nose with tar ?”

It was a scene of solemn grandeur and stillness. Above was the cloudless autumn sky and the blazing sun, and below was the sea-like plain, with great scarlet splotches of bulberries glowing against the brown buffalo grass.

The surgeon was in high spirits, and made his shaggy pony prance while he talked about the prison-like life of a frontier fort. How often I have seen these men of science plodding along in the dull routine of garrison duty, and chafing against the narrow restraints of military discipline, only to stand some day on the firing line among the dead and dying, seeking to save while all others seek to destroy, and without hope of glory !

Presently we could see signs of the Crow Creek Agency in the distance, and on the trail ahead a lonely figure moved on foot across the prairie. As we drew near I was surprised to see a tall girlish figure furnished

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

forth in a silk dress, jaunty French bonnet, high-heeled shoes, and brown kid gloves. A daintier miss never trod the soil of that savage wilderness. As she tripped on before us we wondered what could have brought her there.

When the surgeon spurred his animal to pass the stranger she turned her head. It was an Indian girl. The surgeon bared his head and reined in his pony.

"Why, Zeewee!" he said, "what a picture you make on the prairie! What are you doing out here alone?"

The girl smiled, and unconsciously put her little gloved hand to her bonnet to straighten it. It was a face of singular refinement, although not beautiful. The nose was straight, the mouth tenderly curved, the brow broad and comely, the eyes dark and expressive, the skin smooth and dusky, and the splendid black hair banded above the delicately veined temples. As her lips parted she showed teeth as white as snow. There was something profoundly sad in the expression of the fresh young countenance.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"I am working among my people," she said in a tremulous voice.

"Poor Zeewee! it must be hard on you," muttered the surgeon.

"It is the will of God," said the Indian girl, simply. "I have been chosen, and I must go on to the end."

We rode on in silence for a few moments, and when Zeewee was a dot in the distance behind us, I heard the story of a martyr of American civilization.

It was the policy of the government to take the young children of Indian chiefs to academies in the East and, after educating them, send them back among their savage people as object lessons. Zeewee was the daughter of Don't-Know-How, a friendly chief. I saw her father's tepee. The Indian agent had allowed him to carry on a petty trading business, and some military wag had provided the chief's doorway with a sign inscribed "D. K. How, Trader." In her early childhood Zeewee was taken from her parents and placed in the Hampton Institute, in far-away Virginia.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

In time the young Indian girl forgot the surroundings of her childhood. The filthy tepee, the wild dances, the painted braves, and the fearful nights on the frozen ground gradually faded from her mind. She remembered only that her father was a man of importance among his people, and that her mother loved her and moaned when she was taken away.

As Zeewee grew up, her teachers exerted themselves to turn her mind from memories of the old life. It was a part of the government's scientific plan to divorce the children of the Indians from their past, and thus destroy any lingering influences which might in the future serve to wean them back to tribal barbarism. All the sweet memories of home, which shine through the lives of other little ones, were ruthlessly eradicated. Too many Indians had gone back to their blankets after leaving the government schools. So, all that little Zeewee could do was to carry in her breast the vague consciousness that somewhere on her native plain there was a home to which she would one day return. From time to time

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

she received messages from her father, who promised always that he would give a great feast to welcome her back.

Slowly the Sioux maiden became an accomplished young lady, with a smattering of Latin and music and art, and a love for the feminine things of civilization. She had romantic ideas about her race. As she read the story of Mexico, she dreamed that her people were like the gentle Aztecs. The tales of the Moors in Granada fired her imagination. Her heart thrilled with pride at the thought that the noble blood of Carthage or of the lost tribes of Israel might be flowing in her veins; for history was full of arguments to prove that the Carthaginians and the wandering Jews had reached the Western continent. Zeewee nursed this sentiment. She met and associated with educated white girls, and the spirit of civilization grew bright and strong in her soul. Every vestige of the aboriginal instinct died out. She became as the daughters of the white race.

Her father? What was he like? Tall and noble and gracious? Her mother and sisters

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

and brothers? She tried to recall some impression of her home. Her father was a chief, a leader, a man of wisdom and authority. Her mother was the daughter of a chief. Her ancestors had distinguished themselves in battle and in council. Her kinsmen were all of chieftain blood. They would meet her in the ancestral home on the mighty prairies, and talk to her about the splendid deeds and lofty traditions of their tribe.

Zeewee graduated with her class at the Hampton Institute. The time had come for her to go to her people. Years of study and association had developed in her a grace and dignity of manner rare even among the daughters of white men. Through the kindness of her Eastern friends, she was able to dress herself in the latest fashion. For hours she stood before her mirror arranging her little fineries, and wondering whether she was attired in a manner becoming the child of an ancient line of chieftains. Then she went by railway to Dakota, and crossed the plain to Crow Creek.

They led her to the entrance of her father's

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

tepee. She stooped and entered. One glance at the squalid group of savages crouching about the fire revealed the awful gulf that was fixed between her and her people. Her eyes filled with tears.

“Father! Mother!” she cried passionately.  
“Speak to me!”

A chorus of grunts expressed the astonishment of the family. The old chief eyed the gloved and bonneted girl suspiciously.

“My daughter weeps,” he said. “Is she unhappy?”

“No! no! no!” wailed Zeewee, throwing herself upon her father’s breast, “but I feel so strange here.”

The wrinkled mother looked at her daughter, and shrank back into her blanket. Zeewee turned to her brothers and sisters. They drew away timidly from the soft-voiced visitor, and stared at her silken skirt and gloves.

With a sob the girl sank upon the earthen floor, stripped the gloves from her hands, tore the bonnet from her head, loosened her black hair, and shook it out upon her shoulders.

“Brothers! Sisters!” she said gently. “I

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

have come back to my own people, to live with you and die with you. Christ be my helper."

That night she slept under a blanket with her youngest sister. They cried themselves to sleep in each other's arms—one because she was civilized, and the other because she was not.

Thus began the silent martyrdom of Zeewee — agent of civilization.

## CHAPTER XVI

### *On the Firing Line in the Philippines*

THERE were days in hoary Manila, before the little brown men began to retreat over the hot rice fields and through the green bamboo jungles, when our army lay in the trenches around the scorching city, a semicircle of misery twenty miles long, harassed night and day by the watchful insurgent sharpshooters — days of strain when a craven-hearted policy and a wooden-headed military censorship prevented the war correspondents in the Philippines from giving the American Congress and the American people a hint of the secrets of that strange scene.

It was a time when the startled native looked with wondering eyes upon the flag that was borne across the Pacific as a promise of liberty; when the race that had not yet learned to tuck its shirt inside of its trousers

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

had at least learned to look to America as the great protagonist of human rights, and had eagerly copied its songs of freedom. Aguinaldo strutted among his generals at Malolos. Otis dawdled at his desk in Manila. The two armies faced each other and waited. No word of surrender from Malolos. No word of conciliation from Washington. The correspondents in the iron grip of the censor.

Yet one afternoon the two peoples spoke to each other across the cruel barrier of race and language, and I, looking on, heard the voice in which age speaks to age.

It was one of those spectacles in which the souls of men rise mysteriously into concord above the clamors and hatreds of war, touched by the central flame of universal brotherhood.

The Kansas regiment occupied the trenches on the left of our line, and Colonel Funston, the gamecock of the army, had kept his men close to their work. It was a perilous position, for just beyond the screen of trees, on the other side of an open stretch of rice fields, was massed the main army of the Philippine Republic. The intrenchments of the enemy were so close

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

that we could see them plainly, and the pale blue figures moving here and there in the edge of the woods. On the extreme left were advanced breastworks of sandbags to guard against a "night rush." Behind the Kansas line was a venerable church. The roof was shattered by shells from Dewey's fleet, the chancel rail was converted into a harness rack, and the side altar into a telegraph operator's table, the vast stone floor covered with beds of officers, and the sacred images roughly piled in a distant corner. In front of the church door a cloud of smoke arose from the cook's tent.

The haggard Americans sat or walked in the trenches where they had slept for two weeks without relief. A few looked over the rough brown earthworks at the parched fields shimmering in the fierce sunlight. The weary officers walked up and down the line, scanning the enemy from time to time with their glasses. Occasionally a too venturesome man would attract the attention of the insurgents, and a volley of Mauser bullets would drive him to cover.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

An infantry band sent from the city to cheer our tired men tilted gayly in the rear. It was the first music that had been heard there since the outbreak of war between the United States and the Philippine Republic. Now and then a pair of soldiers would waltz to the music in the trench, crouching in fantastic attitudes to avoid the aim of the enemy's marksmen. A few converted their tin cups into drums, and beat time with their knives and forks. Then the music changed from gay to grave. At last the concert was ended and the band marched back to the city.

Suddenly a strain of music was heard from the enemy's line — sweet, quavering chords that sounded strangely familiar. Instantly every man in the Kansas regiment was alert. There was a roar of laughter in the trenches. The imitative spirit of the Filipinos was the joke of the army.

"By thunder!" yelled a tall Kansan, "they can't even let us have a little music to ourselves. The niggers have brought their band to the front."

"Wonder what in hell they're playing?"

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

cried another. "Bet it's the 'Aguinaldo March.' Listen!"

Across the brown stretch of dead rice came the solemn sound of the hymn, "Stand up for Jesus."

"Nary a stand-up here, with nigger rifles pintaed at us," roared the tall Kansan.

"Invitation respectfully declined," shouted the other.

"Better keep down, boys," said an officer, sharply. "It's a trick. They'll open fire in a minute. Don't show your heads."

Still the sound of the stately tune came swelling through the air, now soft and tender, now loud and passionate.

"Stand up! stand up for Jesus,  
Ye soldiers of the cross;  
Lift high His royal banner,  
It must not suffer loss."

There was a sudden silence in the trenches. Memory was at work. It was a voice from home, a message from dear old Kansas, an echo of other days and gentler scenes.

The music ceased. Every man listened. There was a hush in the air, and the descending

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

sun cast long shadows in the field. Through the tangled masses of trees that hid the Philippine musicians, a few figures could be seen moving boldly out on the enemy's works.

Then a beautiful thing happened. From the distant camp came a rolling throb of drums, and the insurgent band swung grandly into "The Star-spangled Banner." There was a moment of yawning surprise, and then the whole Kansas regiment, stretched out for nearly half a mile, leaped from the trenches and stood on top of the earthworks. Every soldier drew his heels together, uncovered, and placed his hat over his left breast. It was the regulation salute to the national anthem. As the music rolled forth, clear, high, splendid, the Kansans straightened themselves and remained motionless while the enemy continued to play the one supreme psalm of America. The whole line was exposed. Not a man carried a weapon in his hand. Yet not a shot was fired. The Filipinos watched the bareheaded American regiment, and played on. It was one of those psychological moments when some profound sentiment unites thousands of hearts ; when the pentecostal spirit descends, and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the passions of men are stilled in the presence of a common altar.

“Oh say, does the star-spangled banner still wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave ?”

What was it that stirred the insurgent Asiatics to play that anthem? What was it that inspired a whole regiment to bare its breast to the enemy in order to salute the music? What power held the forces of death in leash while Kansan and Malay faced each other that burning day? Why did the rugged men in khaki shed tears? And when the anthem was done, and the splendid line still stood erect and uncovered on the breast-works, why did that roar of applause ascend from the Philippine camp?

Never was there a loftier scene on a field where men were met to shed each other's blood — a noble challenge, nobly met.

When it was over there was an interval of silence, but as the light died out of the sky, and the stars appeared, the sound of rifles was heard again.

“My heart was in my throat when I heern them play that,” said the tall Kansan, as he took careful aim over the earthwork.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

I tried to cable a description of that event to my newspaper, but the dull military censor was stony-hearted.

“That’s not news,” he said, “that’s poetry—and poetry don’t go.”

---

Darkness descended on the shrivelled rice fields and green thickets, and the three brigades of McArthur’s division stretched out in irregular line, with the centre just in front of the venerable church of La Loma and its war-trampled graveyard; a group of American officers took a last twilight look at the distant intrenchments of Aguinaldo’s army from the top of the stone cemetery wall, at the side of which lay a ditchful of bones, leprous white, the relics of generations whose descendants had failed to pay rent for the grisly hospitality of graves. Inside of the massive church walls the flickering light of lanterns and candles fell on rows of tired soldiers sprawled on the stone flooring—one stalwart fellow snoring peacefully on the high altar itself—and on the surgeons preparing stretchers and bandages. In the stained and dusty

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

sacristy General McArthur and his staff ate wedges of canned beef and hardtack off a wooden mantel. Everywhere signs of grim preparation for the advance of the whole division at daybreak toward Malolos, the insurgent capital—war correspondents examining their cameras, chatting with their field couriers, or laughing at the young woman correspondent who had just appeared, artillerymen carrying ammunition for their batteries, the confused sound of passing men and horses. It was to be steady fighting all the way to Malolos, for four rivers and scores of intrenched lines lay across the thirty miles between us and Aguinaldo's seat of government, with twenty thousand or thirty thousand troops — so our prisoners said — against our one division.

And yet the young woman persisted in staying. She had come to see the battle open with the dawn, and nothing could induce her to go back to Manila. No one knew much about her except that she was from San Francisco, and was supposed to write occasionally for a California newspaper. Most of the officers had a nodding and some of them a speaking acquaint-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ance with her. But no one could shake her in her determination to stay all night and watch the death-grapple in the morning. Hints were useless. There was no place for her to sleep—she found two chairs and stretched herself out on them. There was nothing for her to eat—she produced a sticky lump of chocolate and munched it. There might be a night attack by the enemy—she drew an army revolver from her pocket. The place was full of tropical fever—she brought forth some quinine pills, and took a sip of brandy from a dainty cut-glass flask.

Then she shut her teeth hard together, closed her eyes, settled herself down on the two chairs, and ignored the indignant officers, who retreated for consultation. Her small white features were set. She was going to see that fight.

It was a place haunted by memories of Spanish monks and native conspiracy; for the little white-shirted men who knelt at that shrine often carried knives sharpened for the throats of the friars. In the darkness around the church the soldiers moved like phantoms among their horses, and a neglected camp-fire made the shadows of the trees waver on the broken walls. The skulls

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

and bones of the dishonored dead gleamed hideously in the trampled grass.

A lieutenant approached the young woman, and touched her on the shoulder. She looked up without moving. Her ankles were crossed gracefully, her hands were clasped behind her slender neck, and her sailor hat was thrust defiantly over her broad, smooth brow.

"It will be a frightful sight," he said. "I hope you will go back to your hotel. This is no place for you. It is horrible to think of a woman looking at the slaughter of human beings. You cannot imagine how appalling it will be."

She set her hat straight with a coquettish touch and smiled.

"All the better copy for my paper," she answered, with a yawn that showed her pretty teeth. "Besides, it will be a new experience."

"But the danger?"

"The only serious danger that confronts me is the danger that my paper may be beaten. That would be simply frightful." She drew her mouth up in a dainty *moue*, and stared absently into the night, as if she had forgotten the lieutenant.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The officer made a gesture of despair.

"Have you considered the chances of defeat, of capture?"

"Yes," said the young woman, languidly. "I have considered all, all, all. If I am captured, I will interview Aguinaldo. If I am killed, my paper will print my portrait and a melting account of my death. You cannot frighten me away. I have come to stay."

"But don't you see"—and he stamped his foot till the spurs jingled—"that you are a source of embarrassment to us all; that we feel ourselves responsible for your safety; that—"

"Well, I like that!" remarked the young woman, sitting bolt upright, and tossing her little head back. "Who asked any one to be responsible for me?"

She stretched herself out on the chairs again, and closed her eyes. The lump of chocolate rolled from her lap to the ground. The lieutenant picked the clammy fragment up and held it out between his finger tips.

"You—er—you dropped this thing," he said.

The eyelids opened, and her dark eyes regarded the outstretched hand for a moment.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"You may keep it," she said, and closed her eyes again, with the shadow of a smile trembling about her mouth.

With an indignant gesture, the lieutenant flung the chocolate against the cemetery wall, and strode back to his fellow officers.

"It's no go," he said. "She's going to stay till the fight opens; she has the cheek of a—oh, damn her! let somebody else try."

At this point I was requested to use my influence as a newspaper man to remove the young woman from the fighting front of the army.

"Flatter her," suggested the lieutenant. "Lay it on thick—that generally catches a woman."

"Tell her that her hair is coming out of curl," said a grizzled old captain.

"And that the graveyard air will ruin her complexion," added the lieutenant.

"Oh!" said the young woman, when I explained my mission. "So you would like me to retire and leave the news of the battle to you?"

"Really, nothing was farther from my thoughts than—"

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Oh, of course not. Tricks in all trades but ours. You wouldn't deceive a poor trusting girl, would you?"

She was really beautiful as she lay there in the half-light, mocking me, with her eyes half closed, and her jaunty hat knocked on one side of her head.

"And you are not afraid to look upon the horrors of an actual battlefield, to see men blown limb from limb, perhaps?"

"I am afraid of nothing but my newspaper rivals. Now, please leave me."

She closed her eyes again, and pretended to sleep, but I could see that she was watching me between the soft lashes.

"Infernal cat," growled the lieutenant, when I explained my failure.

Just then we heard a gasp, followed by a scream. The young woman was standing on a chair, with her skirts drawn up, and a look of terror in her face.

"Oh! oh! oh!" she wailed.

"What's the matter?"

"Rats! Two of them! Big, hairy, black rats! There they are now — oh! oh!"

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Place is full of rats," said the lieutenant, eagerly. "Hundreds of them, thousands of them—insurgents used to live on them—tropical rats—graveyard rats—worst kind—they're poisonous—worse than snakes—much worse."

"U-u-ugh!" gulped the young woman.

"There is still time to go back to Manila," I suggested.

"If I could only get a horse," she said meekly. "I can't walk back. If I had a horse, I would, I, I"—oh woman! how hard it is to yield!—"I think I would go at once."

Ten minutes later we saw her ride out into the road, and turn her horse's head toward Manila.

"Whew!" said the lieutenant; "don't women beat hell?—face a regiment, but run from a mouse."

---

We were now in front of Malolos. McArthur's division had swept the army of the Philippine Republic backward for a week, and the stained and weary regiments were standing in the early morning twilight ready for the last charge. They had fought through bam-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

boo jungles, waded rivers and swamps, carried line after line of intrenchments, stormed forts, and tramped over the ashes of burning villages, leaving their dead and wounded behind them.

The seat of the rebel government was now before us, and we could see the roof of "Aguinaldo's palace"—a monastery attached to a church—over the green tree-tops.

Right in front of our line was a formidable stretch of bomb-proof earthworks, with clear ground before them. This was to be the scene of the final conflict—the death-thrust of the war.

Every source of information open to us pointed to one serious fact—twenty thousand armed Filipinos, led by the terrible little insurgent president and his ablest generals, were in front of us. All the rollicking gayety that hitherto marked the advance of our forces had vanished. Each man seemed to feel that he was standing in the shadow of death. There was a brooding sense of peril in the air.

My veteran field courier, a tall, lank Connecticut Yankee, hung close to me with my horse.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Might hev t' run," he said. "Ye ben hurt twict on this march, 'n' better look out fer t' third time. Third time's bad luck, 'nless ye've crost a river er seen a black cat. Them there airthwuks 's full er hell 'n' damnation — jam full er niggers, sure! Dead correspondents ain't no good to newspapers, sure! I'll keep th' hoss clus t' ye as I ken. Don't matter much 'bout me, but ye got t' git yer story t' Manila."

Our skirmish lines began to creep out through the trees to the edge of the open rice fields that lay between us and the great masses of new brown earth, behind which the strength and valor of the insurgent army crouched.

A signal from the general, and our batteries began to rain shells at the enemy's works. Bomb after bomb burst over the breastworks. The little machine gun lent to the army by Admiral Dewey ripped out a stream of bullets.

All was silent in the insurgent line. Not a shot in reply. Not a sign of life. Our guns raked the tops of the ridged mounds in vain. They provoked no reply.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Cunnin' divils," whispered my courier, as he bit off a piece of plug tobacco and settled it in his cheek. "Goin' t' wait till we git in clost, 'n' throw lead 'nter us 't p'int-blank range."

The bugles sounded loud and harsh. The Kansas regiment moved out into the clear field, with the Third Artillery on the left and the Pennsylvania regiment on the right. A dusty group of war correspondents walked twenty feet behind the Kansans. The sun glared over the bamboo woods to the right where Hale's brigade was silently advancing to flank the enemy. Not a sound disturbed the stillness of the scene but the tread of feet on the burnt grass and irrigation ridges that checkered the fields over which our line pushed on toward the mysterious stronghold.

Once more the bugles rang out, and our regiments threw themselves flat on the hot ground. Colonel Funston and Colonel Hawkins stood on the railway embankment between their commands, and studied the noiseless earthworks through their glasses. It was a nervous situation. We were getting into close range. At any moment the foe might rise

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

behind that sloping bulwark, and pour volley after volley into our unprotected ranks. Again the bugles commanded, and our line arose, moving ahead with careful, stealthy steps.

Closer, closer we drew. The faces of the soldiers were white. They carried their rifles in both hands, ready for instant work. As they approached the grim fortification they lifted their feet catlike, and bent their bodies forward. There was a thrill of expectant disaster in the ranks, but they went on and on, triggers lightly pressed, and rifles half raised. We were now within a hundred feet of the enemy. The silence was horrible. For a moment the brown line wavered, and was steadied by the sound of the bugles.

A column of black smoke ascended from "Aguinaldo's palace." Was it the signal for the last supreme act of resistance? Every man drew himself together for the first volley from the earthworks. It was a moment of agony. We were only twenty-five feet away. I could hear my heart thumping against my ribs, and confess that I looked for a stone or clod to hide me.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

With a shriek our line suddenly lurched forward and swept up the slanted fortification. The trenches were empty. The enemy had retired in the night, and not a man was in sight. A sighing sound arose from the cheated regiments as they halted in surprise on the brink of the vacant trenches, then a hoarse shout of laughter burst from the soldiers.

At that moment there was a deafening roar in the town, and the black column of smoke rising from "Aguinaldo's palace" changed to a waving tongue of flame. Dense masses of smoke rolled up in every direction. The thunder of cannon and the steady volleying of infantry seemed to be mingled in the terrific clamor. Gradually the sound of battle swelled and the signals of savage conflict spread.

Had Hale's brigade trapped the insurgent army in the capital and forced it to fight?

A company of Kansans dashed along a curving lane that led straight toward the fire-enveloped headquarters of Aguinaldo. Colonel Funston followed, and I joined him. As we ran past the thatched huts and plaster houses, we

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

could see waves of fire and smoke driving over the roof-tops in the town. Malolos was in flames. The din of fighting was demoniac. Volley followed volley with lightning rapidity. The sound of wailing voices pierced the tumult. Yells of terror, cries for help, could be heard. Forked flames lit the smoke everywhere.

As we approached the "palace" we could see the fire eating through the immense roof. There was a low barricade of stones thrown across the street at the entrance to the plaza in front of the burning monastery, where the insurgent congress had defied the United States. A volley was fired from behind the barricade, and as the bullets sang over our heads, Funston ordered the Kansans to reply with two volleys and charge.

The little colonel swung his hat in the air and yelled as he rushed down the street at the head of his men, with clinking spurs and holstered revolver leaping at his belt.

"Give them hell! hell! hell!"

A fierce Kansas scream burst from the soldiers. They were following the hero of the army.

Now a war correspondent in these times must

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

always remember the value of big headlines. To be the first man to enter the conquered capital of the Philippine Republic — even though the honor was won by a yard — would give my paper a chance to thrill the multitude with a sense of its sleepless enterprise. I raced with Funston as he bounded straight towards the enemy's barricade. Gradually I gained on him. We could hear the eager Kansans panting behind us as they dashed along the street. We reached the little wall of stones almost together, and I cleared it at a leap, just ahead of the colonel.

There was no trace of the insurgent army to be seen. We had been tricked again. The glare of burning houses shone on all sides of the plaza. The enemy had fired the town before leaving, and the volley from the barricade was the farewell of the torchmen left to complete the work of destruction. Scores of Chinamen, driven from their homes by the conflagration, ran about the plaza shrieking for water. The battle sounds were merely the explosions of thousands of air-tight bamboo beams in the blazing native houses.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Suddenly a mighty column of fire rose from the "palace," the roof fell in with a roar, throwing up a swirl of sparks, and the home of the Philippine government was a pile of smoking ruins.

"W'an't no heroes made in that battle," said my courier when he found me, "'cepting, o' course, th' army has hold of th' telegraph wires; 'n' repetitions 's easy made when there's a good stout censor 'n guard."

## CHAPTER XVII

### *A Race with a Woman for the Cable*

TIME was when the war correspondent had only men to contend against, men — and censors. The adventurous scout of the press could swing himself into the saddle and ride on the rim of great events with a light heart, knowing the ways and weaknesses of the male intellect. But with the advent of woman came sorrow. The swish of the journalistic petticoat on the edge of the military camp meant the hidden leaking of news, and a correspondent with a clever wife beside him was a man to be dreaded by his rivals. For a woman, when she cannot drag forth the secrets of an army by strength, will make a sly hole in some man's discretion, and the news will run out of itself.

Not that I am opposed to the presence of woman wherever she may seek to follow fortune,—for I have yet to see the place or the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

company that was not bettered by her influence,—but the competition of men and women in war reporting occasionally results in the oddest situations imaginable; and sometimes the contest of beauty and flashlight intuitions against energy and experience develops phases of human nature undreamed of outside of the pages of a novel. The tender eye and beguiling tongue of a woman will often upset the careful plans of the boldest and sharpest male correspondent that ever rode through a battle or hated a censor. He may spend the dreadful day on the firing line, and return to the telegraph station, half-dead with hunger and fatigue, only to find that she has wheedled the heart of the news out of army headquarters, and anticipated his despatch by several precious hours.

I have seen women war correspondents on the firing line more than once, although I have never read an account of a battle written by a woman that had anything of the ring and dash of the real fighting. Curiously enough, women seldom show any signs of timidity or shockability on the battlefield. Once in the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

presence of an actual conflict, they are as eager as the men to see the slaughter pressed, and it sometimes happens that officers are compelled to restrain them from leaving the trenches and rushing forward with storming parties. The sight of slain men seems to move them no more than others.

It is not often that a war correspondent has to engage in a physical race with a woman; but that ungallant and trying experience fell to my lot in Manila.

The adventure came about in this way: The commissioners sent by President McKinley to study the Philippine question in the islands were about to issue a proclamation to the natives declaring the purposes of the United States. This was to be the first definite announcement of our policy in our new possessions. The importance of the proclamation was enormously increased by the struggle between the political parties at home, over the Philippine question. One New York newspaper had authorized its correspondent to offer two thousand dollars for an advance copy of the document. There was deep in-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

trigue for mastery in the matter. The phrasing of the proclamation would disclose the ultimate object of the first war of conquest waged by the United States. It would be the keynote of the bloody contest. The correspondents watched each other jealously, but with an innocent air of indifference to the approaching event, such being the artful methods of newsgathering.

On the day the proclamation was issued, a group of anxious and uneasy correspondents were gathered in the splendid residence of the Philippine Commission, waiting for the president to bring the first printed proofs for distribution. In my eagerness to seize an advantage, I stood on the doorstep of the building, ready to capture the first copy and dash on to the office of the censor, two miles away. My little native carriage was carefully turned with the horse's head toward the city, and the swarthy Tagalog driver sat with the reins in his hands waiting for the signal.

Through the marble-paved corridor I could see a slight, girlish figure seated in the great

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

dim room where visitors were received, and I recognized her as the bright-witted young wife of a correspondent who had been disabled by a poisoned thorn piercing his leg. Her dainty army hat lay on the table beside her, and although she was apparently looking out on the dreaming blue sea through the open window, I knew that she was watching my every movement. She, too, was waiting for a copy of the proclamation, and the incessant tapping of her little foot on the polished floor gave warning that the race would be a bitter one. Her carriage stood in the garden, and I noticed, with alarm, that her horse was a finer animal than my poor, thin steed, which had been shot five times in one day — a creature with a spirit too great for his grotesque body.

Hardly had the president of the commission reached the door when the proclamation was in my hands and my carriage was whirling me off to the censor, without whose approving signature nothing could be cabled from Manila ; but as I started, I could see my slender rival leap from her chair, snatch up her hat, and run toward the door, where the astonished

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

president stood with a bundle of printed sheets under his arm.

It was to be a race. Looking back through the dust that flew from the wheels, I could see the graceful woman in khaki skirt, blue jacket, and rakish army hat, bound into her carriage and, taking the reins up, lay her whip savagely over her horse's shoulders.

"For God's sake go faster!" I cried to my driver. "Don't let that horse pass us."

The wiry little native stood up and lashed the horse into a gallop. I whipped my pencil out and began to skeletonize the proclamation, striking out "and," "the," "a," and other words easily supplied in New York. Every moment, every stroke would count in the struggle. The houses on each side of the street seemed to fly as we rattled madly along the Calle Reale—flaring grogshops, white villas, hospitals, barracks, crazy shanties—but as I turned, I could see my rival gaining on me. She was leaning forward, with the reins held tight, and the whip swishing fiercely, the rim of her military hat blown up by the wind and her hair flying free about her temples.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Faster! faster!” I shouted. “Fifty pesetas if we reach the palace first!”

My poor, long-suffering horse! Even now I shudder when I recall the sound of that terrible whip on his bony sides. With a snort of agony, the animal strained his muscles and tore along the rough road like a runaway. I stood up and urged the driver, and every passionate word I spoke added to the fury of his whip. We began to draw away from our pursuer. The carriage creaked and swayed from side to side. Once we narrowly escaped a collision.

But soon I could hear the swift clamor of my opponent’s wheels, and my heart sank as I saw that she was again drawing near. To be beaten by a woman! The thought drove the hot blood to my head. To be outwitted by a woman in an intrigue was one thing, but to be defeated on the open highway — the perspiration rolled down my face in great drops.

“Faster!” I shrieked, thumping my driver between the shoulders. “A hundred pesetas if we win!”

The frightened driver turned his head and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

grinned. His teeth were stained red with betel-nut, his lips were white, his eyes rolled.

“Horse mucho tire,” he gasped, as he swung his lash ferociously.

The grinding of the wheels behind us grew louder. My horse was covered with foam, and his flesh quivered as he galloped, shaking the ramshackle carriage violently in the flight. The noise of the struggle began to attract attention. Squads of soldiers ran out of their barracks, invalids leaned out of the hospital windows, natives stood still and stared, storekeepers cheered in their doorways, a horde of yelping dogs raced after us in the trailing dust, and—Heaven be gentle to me!—General Lawton sat in front of his headquarters, and laughed when my hat blew off. The street seemed to reel in the dazzling sunlight. The fury of the flight made the wheels jump as they struck the stones, and I was bumped about on the seat until my teeth chattered.

Now I could see her horse’s outstretched head at my side, hear its desperate breathing, and see the curling end of her lash as it shot out. Her little figure sat high on the seat

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

and her feet were braced against the dash-board. Her lips were pressed together and her eyes shone with excitement. Her face was deadly white. She paid no attention to me, but gazed straight ahead at the road and laid on the lashes. The wind had forced her hat on the back of her head and the army buttons on her jacket sparkled in the sunlight. The edges of the white proclamation fluttered at her bosom.

So, for the space of nearly five minutes, we swept on in a rip-roaring, crashing, mad tilt for victory, losing or gaining inch by inch. My driver moved our carriage zigzag to block the street. Chivalry had vanished; courtesy was forgotten. It was a struggle for news, fierce and sexless—the old-style man against the new-style woman. To surrender the road to my rival meant a defeat that could not be explained by cable. The modern newspaper and its thirsty presses take no account of the amenities of life. It has one supreme law—send the news and send it first. Friendship, home, health, and life itself, if necessary, must be sacrificed in the effort.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The dust choked us; the sunlight dazzled our eyes; the jolting made my fever-weakened body ache. My hair was tossed and filled with flying dirt. The barking of the dogs and the wild plunging of the horses swelled the strain of misery.

“Faster!” I screamed, as I clung to my seat. “I’ll give you the horse if you beat her!”

The wiry driver crouched as he took a new hold on the reins for a final burst of speed. My rival stood up and bent over the dash-board. Her brows were drawn together, and the corners of her mouth drooped. The delicate nostrils were dilated. Every line showed the thoroughbred. The horses were almost abreast, and the wheels clashed harshly.

“See-kee!” snarled the driver to the panting steed, “see-kee! see-kee!”

There was a loud crash, and I was thrown out of my seat. We had run into a heavy wagon drawn by a water buffalo; one shaft was tangled in the rope harness, and the buffalo was lunging angrily at my horse’s flank.

I looked up and saw a dainty hand waving

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

farewell to me. My rival had a clear road, and was forcing the pace. She looked back for a moment as I stood there in the street. Her face was radiant. Again she shook her hand, with an air of saucy defiance that maddened me.

In a few moments we extricated ourselves and started in pursuit. The horse was lame and his spirit was gone. Again the pencil struck word after word from the proclamation. A woman had disgraced me in a race; perhaps experience and skill would recover the lost ground. She would forget to prepare her despatch in advance and would have to wait in the censor's office. I might steal in, get the censor's signature and be off for the cable office before she could realize the situation. I was dealing with a clever woman and would need my wits about me.

We passed out of the Calle Reale, and skirting the green meadow where the noble Rizal was bound and shot for loving his country too well, drove through the Lunetta,— that music-haunted strip of sea-park where Spain used to slaughter native patriots by the score.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Dewey's white warships rode at anchor in the blue flood, the ramparts and guns of the "walled city"—the ancient part of Manila—rose before us, but there was no sign of my rival. Over the creaking drawbridge we rolled, and through the little, sentinelled gate, into the narrow, paved streets with their quaint Spanish houses. And presently we drew up in front of the stone-and-plaster palace from which the United States waged war for the conquest of the Philippines. A leap from the carriage, a dash through a stately marble entrance hall, up a flight of stairs, past the stern, sculptured face of Magellan, along a corridor lined with the offices of the army staff, and I stood breathless and hatless before the bald, spectacled, cold-eyed censor.

In the next room sat my rival, bending over her despatch, the busy pencil trembling in her fingers. Her face and clothes were covered with dust. Her hair was in disorder. Her bosom heaved.

Throwing the proclamation on the censor's desk, I told him that I would send it all, and begged him to be quick.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"All?" he roared. "All that? You're going to cable the whole thing?"

My blood danced. I looked quickly at my rival. She would hear.

"Yes—all," I answered in a low voice, and with a pantomime appeal for secrecy.

"All?" he shouted, so that every word could be heard in the other room. "Do you mean to say that"—and he grew shriller at every word—"you intend to send the whole proclamation?"

The enemy was warned. I saw her start. The color flamed in her pale face. She gathered her despatch up and waited. Her foot beat a sharp tattoo on the floor. Her head was thrown back impatiently. The race was to be resumed.

How slow the censor was! He drew enclosing lines about the proclamation with a blue pencil, and wrote his initials on each page. Then he yawned.

"It'll cost money to cable that," he said, as he languidly scanned the despatch.

"Quick!" I urged. "Let me have it. Every second counts."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The censor frowned, and adjusted his spectacles.

"We don't do things in a hurry here," he said. "I must see what there is in this despatch. The newspapers are too sensational, and the general won't stand any nonsense."

There was something maddening in the easy insolence of the man. I could have strangled him with pleasure — two miles and a half to the cable office, and my foe in the next room ready to follow me. But at last he surrendered the despatch, and I made for the street.

My horse was tired out. I seized a carriage standing close by, and ordered my driver to start at a gallop for the main cable office on the outskirts of the city. There was a branch office nearer, but it would be dangerous to let a woman get to the main office alone. Who could tell what gentle arts of persuasion and flattery, what tear-in-the-voice diplomacy might accomplish? A minute lost or won, even a second, would settle the fight for possession of the cable. The man who competes with a woman must be sure that she does not get

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

between him and his base of operations. A thousand subtle forces alien to the slow male mind may trip and trap him. I had learned by bitter experience that a woman will out-reach a man by the very elements which are set down by philosophy as her weaknesses. She can arouse sympathy and compassion when a man will excite ridicule. She can grasp an advantage, however shadowy it may be, and convert it into a solid thing. She can see when a man is blind. When her soul is aroused she fears nothing and knows nothing but that she is a woman, and that she is bound to have her way. In short, she is the most dangerous, the most cunning, the most wilful, and the most damnably adorable rival that ever confronts the male war correspondent.

We swept back through the mediæval streets, thundered over the venerable drawbridge that spans the dry moat surrounding the massive walls of the old city, and galloped along the Lunetta to the sound of a military band. We looked for pursuit, but in vain. There was no trace of that terrible woman. The road was clear behind us, save for the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

slow pleasure vehicles moving toward the music stand. She had gone to the branch cable office. She would be delayed by the Spanish clerks, for it would take a miracle to make a Spaniard do anything in a hurry. There was still a chance for me. I might beat her yet. The manager at the main office was an Englishman, and could be stirred to swift action. If I reached the end of the cable a moment before her despatch was telegraphed in from the branch office, God would have given her into my hands. I had a fresh horse. The air seemed to grow more pleasant as we whirled along the edge of the sparkling water. My driver kept looking backward, and believing that the race was over, allowed the horse to settle down into a gentle trot, while he lit a cigarette. But I would take no chances. I remembered the startled eyes and glowing face in the censor's office. My rival was not a woman to give up a fight.

"Gallop!" I cried. "Use your whip as if your life depended on it."

The stinging lash went singing through the air and the horse went forward at full speed.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Faster! Faster!”

Back through the Calle Reale we went, lurching and rattling, with a train of barking dogs racing in our dust; back past the hospitals, saloons, shops, barracks, and white villas, making the highway hideous with our onrush. The soldiers and the shopkeepers cheered me as I went by, and General Lawton flung my hat at the carriage in a burst of enthusiasm. Everybody understood that it was a race for the cable, and everybody thought I had won. But I knew better. I trembled as I thought of that frail figure flying in the opposite direction to the branch office, the determined face, the quick wit, and man-compelling tongue. On, on, on, past schools and monasteries, past the army gospel tent, over the road on which the Spanish troops fled before the American vanguard, past houses riddled with shells from Dewey’s guns, past wonderful trees that shed fragrance at night and are scentless in the daytime, with dogs in front, dogs on each side, and dogs behind, snapping and snarling and tumbling over each other. The sweet faint odor of the green ylang-ylang flower

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

was in every nostril. The tropic sun was reflected in every window. A cool breeze fanned my face. The road was clear.

When we reached the little wooden cable office, whose walls were scarred by many a bullet, I burst into the manager's office and laid my despatch before him.

"I want to hold the wire."

"It will cost money to make sure of it," said the manager.

Glancing around the office I saw that every telegraph instrument was idle. Not a sound disturbed the silence. My rival's despatch had not yet begun to arrive on the city wire. At that moment the instrument through which her message must come began to click loudly. The manager ran to the key and listened. It did not need that rough chuckle to tell me that my enemy had filed her despatch. The manager turned to me with a curious smile.

"You want your message to go first?"

"Of course—it must go first. I am first on the ground."

"Yes," he said, "you are first by nearly a minute. Will you send it at the press rate, the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

commercial rate, or the urgent rate? The commercial rate is three times greater than the press rate, and the urgent rate is nine times more than the press rate."

"Send the first page at the urgent rate," and I groaned when I figured out the cost.

The city wire was silent. An operator sat down and made ready to take my rival's message. Another operator began to cable my first page to Hong Kong. I watched the city wire. The manager watched me. It was a desperate game. The little woman at the other end of that wire represented one of the richest and most prodigal newspapers in New York. Its proprietor prided himself on his supremacy in war news. He would not forgive a correspondent who was beaten. My enemy was a woman. What would she do? Would she file her whole despatch at the urgent rate? She had the professional reputation of her sick husband to guard. Her newspaper could afford to use the urgent rate. But did she have the nerve?

My first page was finished. The cable operator asked for instructions, and the manager faced me.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Press or urgent?”

The city wire clicked sharply, and the operator began to write out my rival’s despatch. There was no time to lose. An urgent despatch would take precedence over all but government messages. It was a plunge in the dark, yet I had to take it, for in another moment the competing despatch would be on the cable, if it was marked “urgent,” and I would be helpless to recover the wire.

“Urgent,” I said. “I must win.”

Then I sat down and tried to count the expense of sending the proclamation to New York. The woman was mastered at last. She might send an urgent despatch right on the heels of my message, but the money would be wasted. Official matters would crowd in between the two despatches at Hong Kong, Singapore, Calcutta, Bombay, Aden, Port Said, Gibraltar, and all along the route to America, widening the distance between my message and hers. Her words would reach New York a day after mine and, for newspaper purposes, a day is as good as a century. The fight was won.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

In a few minutes we heard a light step and my rival entered. Her face was colorless and drawn. She looked imploringly at the manager. The burly Englishman smiled at us.

"I can't tell secrets," he said. "Some one has been beaten, but you'll never get a hint out of me."

She smiled and shook hands with me.

"I suppose you have been cabling a few words," she said, with an innocent face.

"Oh, just a little message to let them know I'm alive."

"I sent a word or two myself."

We looked into each other's eyes and understood.

"That message of yours will cost just seven thousand six hundred and two dollars and forty-two cents in silver," whispered the manager in my ear as I left the office.

It was my first race with a woman. Heaven save me from another!

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *In the Black Republic*

IT is many years since I first breathed the enchanted air of journalism, and in that time the wayward fortunes of my profession have led me among many peoples. I have heard the Aladdins of America and Europe cry, "New lamps for old!" and I have heard the Aladdins of Asia answer, "Old lamps for new!" I have wandered on the frontier where civilization and barbarism meet, seeing good and bad in both. But I have looked upon no stranger country than Hayti, the black island republic, where gold-laced militarism, French fashions and Christianity are hopelessly tangled with African serpent worship and savage tribal traditions.

I was sent to the negro republic by a great American newspaper, whose proprietor believed that the Haytians must some day become a part of the United States; and I bore a message to

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

President Hyppolite — one of those curious communications which New York journalism occasionally addresses to small nations when news is scarce ; for the modern editor is seldom contented unless he feels that he is making history as well as writing it.

There was something romantic and mysterious in a mission to a people whose great grandfathers were naked savages in the African forests. A curious place to send a city-bred American newspaper man to ; yet a realm full of food for the student of man. I had seen the red savage of Dakota in a silk hat, but I was presently to see the African savage wearing a general's uniform and a sword, and speaking French.

A hundred years ago the negroes of Hayti who had been carried in chains from Africa to take the place of the gentle native Indians, worked to death by the Christian discoverers of America, astonished the world by setting up an independent government of their own.

The influence of the French Revolution spread itself to the remotest parts of the French dominions. Under the leadership of Toussaint l'Ouverture, a black of unmixed blood, the people

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of Hayti drove the troops of Napoleon, of Spain, and of England out of the island. An army of slaves, commanded by a slave, successfully defied the conqueror of Europe. Their soil was the richest known in any part of the world. French energy and administrative genius had developed the country until its products were carried to all the great ports of Europe, and its treasury was overflowing. Splendid palaces were to be found in the cities. There was not a more prosperous place on the map. But the cruelties of France drove the slaves into rebellion, and when Toussaint, after freeing his country, had been lured away and starved to death in a dungeon by Napoleon, his successor, Dessalines, soon after had himself crowned as Emperor of Hayti. When he died the republic was founded, but the first president, Christope, proclaimed himself a king. So extraordinary was the enterprise of this savage monarch, that he was able to build a beautiful palace and a fortress with walls eighty feet high on a mountain peak five thousand feet above the sea—a feat that amazes engineers who have seen the ruins. After the death of the king,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

the republic was reëstablished and maintained until Soulouque, an ignorant negro soldier, was chosen as president. He, too, became an emperor, paying ten thousand dollars for a jewelled crown and a hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the rest of the royal regalia. When he finally fled from the island in 1859, the republic was again restored, and it has been the Haytian form of government ever since.

The history of the black republic is a tale of conspiracy, war, treachery, massacre, cannibalism, and corruption without a parallel among the nations. And yet it was of the founder of this nation that Wendell Phillips said:—

“I would call him Napoleon, but Napoleon made his way to empire over broken oaths and through a sea of blood. This man never broke his word. I would call him Cromwell, but Cromwell was only a soldier, and the state he founded went down with him into his grave. I would call him Washington, but the great Virginian held slaves. This man risked his empire rather than permit the slave trade in the humblest village of his dominions. Fifty years hence, when Truth gets a hearing, the Muse

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of History will put Phocion for the Greek, and Brutus for Rome, Hampden for England, Fayette for France; choose Washington as the bright, consummate flower of our earlier civilization, and John Brown the ripe fruit of our noonday; then, dipping her pen in the sunlight, will write in the clear blue, above them all, the name of the soldier, the statesman, the martyr, Toussaint l'Ouverture."

But I had not been in Hayti forty-eight hours before I learned that the national hero was not Toussaint, of whom the Marquis d'Hermonas wrote, "He was the purest soul that God ever put into a body," but Dessalines, the pitiless emperor who ordered his soldiers to kill practically the whole white population of the island.

Rome had reared her altars in the island, and the state religion was Christianity; but the voodoo priesthood, skilled in mysterious vegetable poisons, and burning with the serpent-superstitions of the African wilds, was a power among the people. The Christian knight may lay his sword upon the tomb of Christ and pray for victory, but he knows that the warrior of Islam has laid his cimeter upon the grave of Moham-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

med in appeal. So the solemn ritual of the Christian church in Hayti is answered by the ghastly rites of voodooism. The same people attend both houses of worship, finding nothing incongruous in this contrast of heaven and hell.

It was New Year's Eve, and the streets of Port-au-Prince, the Haytian capital, echoed the dull throbbing of drums beaten in the voodoo ceremonies. Sounds of barbaric revelry came from every direction. The wild orgies of the serpent worshippers were in full swing. Mounting a native pony, so thin that he could scarcely bear my weight, I rode about with a guide through the filthy streets of the city. It was a night of beauty, but the white moonlight that descended from the lovely tropic sky made the rows of huts and slattern houses look even more hideous than they were in the day. At almost every corner we were challenged by a barefooted negro sentry, for Port-au-Prince was under siege law. Around the palace of the president — a modern plaster building — was a cordon of sentries, all barefooted, and many of them swinging in hammocks while on duty. The city swarmed with soldiers and with officers

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

covered with gold lace. Several times that night we saw officers in resplendent uniforms, but without shoes. The monotonous rub-a-dub of the voodoo drums, the ululations of the mystic singing, the incessant fanfare of military bugles, and the lazy droning of the sentries in all the streets added to the weird suggestiveness of the sullen black faces that stared at us wherever we turned. We were in the midst of negro civilization, in the capital of a nation governed by black men for a century without the interference of the white race,—and we were within sight of Cuba. The sentries gave me my first glimpse of the Haytian character.

“Who goes there?” (in French).

“Foreigner!” answered my companion.

“White man, give me ten cents.”

“Go to blazes!”

“White man, give me a cigar.”

“Go to blazes!”

“Bon!”

It happened that way again and again, always in the same words and always with the same result. Sometimes the sentries were asleep in their hammocks, and, awakened by

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

noise of our ponies' hoofs, did not even take the trouble to raise their heads when challenging us.

On the outskirts of the city we entered a cabin and watched a black voodoo priest with a red handkerchief tied about his head, drawing cabalistic signs around a rusty sword stuck in the ground, while seven or eight half naked negresses abandoned themselves to an unspeakably obscene dance before an altar-like box which contained the live serpent-god. Twenty or thirty negro men, some of them fashionably dressed, and some of them ragged peasants, stood about the room drinking rum. A wizened old man sat on the ground thumping a sheepskin drawn over the end of a hollow log, and giving voice to a wild rhythmic caterwauling, which was answered from time to time by a passionate chorus from the singers. It was the voodoo dance of the African tribes—the prelude to human sacrifice and cannibalism, although the influence of Western civilization in Hayti had substituted the blood of goats and fowl for the blood of innocent children—"the goat without horns."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

As I looked away from the dusky dancers twisting and swaying before the altar of the mystic serpent, I was astonished to see on a shelf on the opposite wall colored pictures of Christ and the Virgin, with lighted candles twinkling in front of them. Presently the voodoo priest trimmed the lights, and bowing low before the picture of the Virgin, drank a glass of white rum, and resumed his incantations at the voodoo shrine. Gradually the men began to dance before the negresses, the crowd grew drunker, and the scene became so foul that we withdrew. As we left, all lights were extinguished but the candles that shone upon the mild face of the Saviour. For hours we went from hut to hut, witnessing the rites of Central Africa in the capital of a nation whose state religion is Christian.

In one hut I talked with a Haytian colonel in full uniform. As I turned to leave, the colonel touched me on the shoulder.

“Give me ten cents,” he said.

“Give it to him,” said my guide; “he is drunk, and white men are not safe here.”

Several days afterward I saw the colonel

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

on duty at a president's palace, the haughtiest figure of them all.

The next day President Hyppolite reviewed his troops on the parade-ground before the palace. He sat on a black horse in the shade of a tree, and he was a fine figure, with his gold-embroidered blue coat, immense epaulettes, cocked hat, buff breeches, and riding boots. Blue spectacles shaded his eyes. A large silver decoration glittered on his breast. On either side of the president were grouped his principal generals, heavy-faced negroes, covered with gold braid, and wearing enormous swords. The crowd looked with hushed awe upon the military leaders. Cæsar and his legionaries were not more impressive to the multitudes of Rome. Even when the bare-footed soldiers, who were compelled for that day to wear shoes, removed them and marched past the president, carrying their footgear in their hands, no one smiled. But a white man could not look at the gorgeous generals without an effort to control the muscles of his face. Sometimes it seemed as though there were as many officers as privates in the pro-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

cession. Sir Spencer St. John, the former British minister to Hayti, has seriously recorded the fact that out of a Haytian military force of sixteen thousand there were fifteen hundred generals of division.

After a night in the house of an American friend — with tiny lizards crawling on the walls of my bedroom as thick as flies, and a deadly centipede discovered under my pillow — I went to see President Hyppolite.

The head of the black republic received me in a large room furnished in the gaudiest colors, the only striking note being the white anti-macassars on the chairs and sofas. He was a strongly built man with intensely black skin, and his splendidly rounded head was covered with wool of startling whiteness. His eyes were hidden by iron-framed blue goggles. The big flat nose, the long upper lip, the square jaws, the jutting chin, even, flat teeth, and full forehead, indicated the will power that had carried a revolutionary chief into the president's chair. Hyppolite wore a general's uniform, and in spite of the terrible heat, it was buttoned to the chin. His hands were long, sinewy, and gorilla-like.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The expression of his countenance was that of goodness and nobility.

The black president seemed to be unable to smile. Humor was wasted upon him. The negroes of Hayti are a sullen people. A man accustomed to the lovable laughter of negroes in the United States—men whose ancestors came from the same tribes that peopled Hayti—is always surprised by the smileless, saturnine aspect of the Haytian face.

It was an interesting thing for an American citizen to study the foremost man in a nation of negroes, a man born in a republic whose fundamental idea is hostility to white men.

Hypolite listened to the plan for a more exclusively American policy in Hayti. His eyes were concealed behind the little blue panes, but he opened and shut his terrible hands impatiently.

“We are content to be as we are,” he said in the local French patois. “We have learned to look with suspicion upon all schemes for our island coming from white men. We know that they would overrun us if we gave them the opportunity. What has your nation done for our race?”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"It has poured out blood and money, and laid waste whole states in order to make the black man the equal of the white man," I answered.

"Has it?" growled the president. "It has cheated the negro with promises that are never kept, and with laws that are never enforced. The blacks of the United States are kept in a state of inferiority from which they can never rise. You cannot name one negro governor of a state, although there are several American states in which the whites are outnumbered by the blacks. The people of Hayti won their independence from their white masters by the sword, and they will keep it by the sword. The United States tried to get us to give them the Mole St. Nicholas for a coaling station; but we are not fools. No white nation seeks a foothold in this island except as a basis for conquest."

"That is a remarkable statement," I said, "when you recall the fact that, but for the warning given by Mr. Monroe, a President of the United States, to the Holy Alliance, Hayti would have been reconquered by France."

"Ah yes! the Monroe Doctrine! always the Monroe Doctrine!" cried Hyppolite. "But the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

history of the world shows that no race can develop unless it develops itself; no race can be free unless the means of freedom are in its own hands; and no white people can look at a rich country inhabited by negroes without desiring to secure it for themselves. We are free, and we intend to remain free. You see a negro holding the highest office in the nation. Would that be possible if the United States or any other white government had control? No. Each race must live apart to be free. When the races mix, one race or the other must fall into a condition of inferiority."

"And the negroes of Africa?" I interrupted.  
"Will they, too, be able to maintain governments of their own?"

"Probably not. They are unarmed, and surrounded by powerful white nations. But that is a question for the future. The example of Hayti may yet play a part in the destiny of Africa."

Not being initiated into the shrewd mysteries of New York journalism, the president could not understand why an American newspaper should meddle with the governmental

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

affairs of the little republic. Nor did I seek to enlighten him concerning the advantages which a sharp turn of adventurous enterprise may bring to the press in my sensation-loving country.

That week we had a thrilling experience in Port-au-Prince. An American citizen had been arrested for smuggling six cotton shirts into the island. His accuser was an aide-de-camp to the president. In spite of treaty stipulations, the prisoner was kept in jail without having a hearing in court. The American minister had gone to the United States for a rest, and the Haytian government laughed at the repeated protests of the American consul-general. The absent minister was brought to Port-au-Prince on board of the gunboat *Atlanta*. He hurried to the palace and demanded the instant release of the imprisoned American and the payment of twenty thousand dollars — a thousand dollars for each day of wrongful detention. Hyppolite listened to the minister, and scornfully bowed him out of the room. Then he sent for the admiral of the Haytian navy, who reported that, of his two ships,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

one could not move because the engines were broken, and the other had no guns in place. The president consulted his ministers, who advised him to resist. Presently the whole city knew that the republic had been threatened by the United States. The Haytians regarded the matter as a fine joke. It was worth a trip to the tropics to see the jaunty airs of the negro generals, and to hear the terrific rolling of drums in front of the palace.

The American minister consulted the captain of the *Atlanta*, and both sent cabled messages to Washington recommending a "demonstration in force."

"What will you do if our gunboat bombards your capital?" I said to one of the black generals.

"Kill every white man in Port-au-Prince," he said with an amiable grin.

"But that will not save your city from destruction."

The general pushed his cocked hat on the back of his woolly head and spat on the ground vigorously. I could hear his teeth click.

"Two British warships once threatened to

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

bombard the city of Les Cayes," he said, "and do you know what reply the brave Haytians made?"

"No."

"They said to the British, 'Tell us which end of the city you will begin to burn, and we will commence to burn the other end.' That was a good answer, wasn't it?"

It is impossible to convey an idea of the leering vanity and insolence in that savage face. The eyes rolled sidewise, the lids drooped cunningly, the nostrils expanded, and the thick underlip was thrust out.

"Tell that story to the captain of your gun-boat," he said. "Tell him I told you—I, I, I"—and he slapped his breast valiantly.

"Suppose you come to the ship with me and tell him yourself," I suggested.

"It would be contrary to the etiquette of our army," he said. "A Haytian soldier is not allowed to boast."

While the captain of the *Atlanta* waited for orders to train his guns on Port-au-Prince and bring the black republic to terms, he found it impossible to learn the size or condition of the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

guns in the three harbor forts which commanded his vessel. In order not to unnecessarily arouse the passions of the population, the captain decided not to send any of his men on shore, and requested me to find out what I could about the armament of the forts.

It was a serious task, for a white man discovered in the act of gathering information for a hostile warship would have his throat cut without ceremony. I went to a drinking house just outside of the wall of the cemetery and found a Haytian colonel with whom I had become acquainted.

"You have come just in time to see a man die," he said, as I sat down at the table beside him. "He cut a man's throat, and will be shot. The army does that work in Hayti."

A great multitude gathered, men, women, and children, of every shade of black, shouting, singing, drinking, and dancing. It was a festival. Not a note of pity, not a sign of reverence. The bright handkerchiefs worn by the women lent an air of carnival gayety to the picture. Children were carried in their mothers' arms to see the brave sight.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

Then came a shining stream of bayonets, and sixteen hundred black soldiers were drawn up in a line facing the cemetery wall, with a dazzling group of mounted officers at the centre. The prisoner, a fine-looking, well-dressed negro, was led out in front of the soldiers by a white cord fastened to his right wrist, a black priest with a crucifix walking by his side.

The military commandant of Port-au-Prince, plumed and covered with gold lace, galloped out to the prisoner, unrolled the death warrant, struck a theatrical attitude and, with one hand outstretched, read the sentence. A firing squad of six soldiers advanced to within fifteen feet of the victim.

“Isn’t it fine!” said the colonel, rapturously, as we watched the scene.

A bottle of rum and a glass were handed to the prisoner. He filled the glass and drank it off at a gulp. Then he received a cigar and a match. He scratched the match on his trousers, lit the cigar in a lazy, swaggering way, and puffed at it with the easy carelessness of a mere spectator. It was an

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

old custom, for the Haytians enjoy the sight of courage in the presence of death.

On all sides rose sounds of festivity. The crowd swayed joyously in the bright sunlight. And out there on the dull red earth the condemned man stood beside his open grave, calmly smoking his cigar, with the stolid soul of old Africa in his face.

The squad fired. Not a shot hit the prisoner. The soldiers reloaded their rifles and fired again. His arm was broken, but he stood still. Another volley and he fell, yet he moved. A soldier advanced, and putting the muzzle of his rifle to the prostrate body, ended the agony. Then the crowd shrieked and danced, and was suddenly silent and sullen.

How was I to get a look at the interior of the forts? It was plain that the colonel would not help me if he suspected my purpose. There was not a man in the place who would not have cheerfully killed me, had I given a hint of my mission.

“You have plenty of soldiers for a small nation,” I remarked, as the troops surged past the house.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

The colonel showed the whites of his eyes, and twisted his mouth into the semblance of a smile.

"The great Napoleon made that same remark," he said.

"It's a pity you have no good guns in your harbor forts."

"Wha-a-at?"

"It seems so strange that a great military nation like Hayti"—I kept my face straight—"should be defenceless against a sea attack."

"Have you seen the guns in our forts?"  
The colonel showed his sharp white teeth.

"No; but I'll bet fifty francs that there is not a good modern rifle in place."

"I accept the bet," roared the colonel.

"How will we decide it?"

"I will show you the guns."

"When?"

"Now."

It was necessary to show some reluctance.

"I'm afraid you are too sharp for me, colonel. Let us wait until to-morrow."

"No, no," shouted the excited officer, jump-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ing to his feet, "you must go now. I don't intend to let you escape from the wager."

And so I was taken into all the forts, and was permitted to examine all the guns and ammunition. Within half an hour I had made my report to the captain of the *Atlanta*, and that night he trained his guns on the one effective fort in Port-au-Prince.

But hardly were the preparations for a bombardment complete when a message from Washington instructed the commander of the gunboat to refrain from any hostile demonstration, and the negro generals got drunk for joy. The United States had been challenged to war and had not dared to face the nation that vanquished Napoleon.

In the generous excitement of that great moment, the American minister was privately informed that the Haytian government would gladly pay the twenty thousand dollars demanded by the United States, on condition that the Minister of Foreign Affairs was to be allowed to quietly retain six thousand dollars for himself — the American minister to

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

make his own arrangements for a share of the booty. The offer was declined.

Island of fairy loveliness! Palm-crested, ever-green mountains! Dreamy valleys, sparkling with sweet waters! Soil of eternal youth and riches! The palaces and plantations of the French have vanished. The knightly spirit of Toussaint l'Ouverture is dead. The stateliness of the old days has given place to a monstrous caricature of civilization. A stupid and merciless military despotism arrays its blood-stained body in the fair garment of republicanism. The most corrupt and debased government known to man flourishes in the one spot where nature seems to link heaven and earth together.

Who that has seen Hayti and the United States, shall say that the negro is dragged downward by association with his white brother? The black men of Hayti have lived for a hundred years, without outside hindrance, on a soil of surprising wealth, in a climate married to their temperament, shielded from invasion by the greatest power of the American continent, and possessed of all the knowledge that history

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

can teach a free people. Yet they are slowly returning to the darkness and misery of primordial Africa. The black men of the United States, torn from their native soil by slave-dealers, and set in the midst of white men, have profited by every advance the republic has made, and, led by lofty-minded negroes like Booker T. Washington, are gradually emerging into the light of that serene civilization in which alone can true liberty endure.

I sharpened the pencil which jotted down these lines with a knife from the table of the negro emperor Soulouque. It has a cheap iron blade and a solid gold handle, on which is engraved an imperial crown and Soulouque's monogram. It was this sable monarch who created four negro princes and fifty-nine negro dukes, yet he ended his murderous reign by flying from his enraged subjects under the protection of the white crew of a British gunboat.

“Create nobles?” cried Dessalines, when he ascended the throne. “Never! I am the only noble in Hayti.”

## CHAPTER XIX

### *Newsgathering in the Clouds*

LOOKING through the pages of the note-books that carry the story of my boyish days in journalism, I find a few rough scrawlings that bring to mind a bright Canadian sky, the green slopes of Mount Royal, a chattering crowd spread out on one of the lacrosse fields of Montreal, and a great, glistening, yellow gas bag wobbling in circles above an iron cage, with huge fan wheels, in which I was to make a journey through the air for the edification of the insatiate American newspaper public.

It was midsummer; news was scarce, and New York had to be amused. There was something occult in aerial navigation that appealed to the imagination, and, like a bull-fight, a balloon trip held the delightfully exciting possibilities of human sacrifice. Besides, there was always a chance that the latest

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

airship might solve the great problem and give man dominion of the air. I was a youth then and the prospect of rough adventure thrilled me.

"The confounded old airship may not be worth a continental," said my chief, before I left New York, "but the voyage will make a good story. Be careful of yourself. If you break your neck, remember, you can't write your despatch." With this sympathetic advice in my ears, I went to Montreal.

The multitude that gathered in the lacrosse ground to see the new airship ascend was typical of Canada — boisterous, fresh-faced, and full of the love of open-air sports — with here and there a bearded *habiton*, a jaunty volunteer in uniform, or an Indian pedler. It was the same sort of crowd that in winter flings itself into the hearty excitements of skating, snowshoeing, and tobogganing.

A thousand fingers poked the varnished sides of the big gas bag, picked at the net that held it in captivity, or watched the painted canvas pipe that undulated and pulsed, like a monstrous brown serpent, as the gas streamed

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

through it into the balloon. A few examined the odd-looking steering wheels, whose great blades, turned by an iron crank, were made to feather like oars at any point, a simple mechanical device. Strong guy-ropes prevented the tossing yellow monster from tearing itself away in the rising wind. A group of sturdy workmen held on to the car, a primitive square structure made of light iron tubes.

It was time to start. Grimley, the aeronaut, a shrewd little Yorkshireman, nimble of hand and foot, stepped into the car, and a babble of voices arose. The multitude pressed close and stared at the sky-sailor. He was a singular figure and carried with him a strange sense of mystery. When he was not a balloonist he was a tailor, dancing master, or teacher of mesmerism. His muscular, graceful little body weighed only a hundred and ten pounds, but what he lacked in inches and girth he made up in his commanding face. He had the brow of a poet—broad, white, veined with blue—and his military mustaches turned up sharply from a full-lipped,

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

determined mouth. The extraordinary features of the countenance were the eyes, large, intensely black, and bold as a lion's. I had seen him hypnotize a man once, and knew the power of that glance.

As I pushed my way through the swaying, excited crowd, and reached the side of the car, I was confronted by another correspondent, who insisted upon his right to make the trip.

"The car will only hold two," said Grimley; "one of you must stay on the earth."

The crowd saw the situation, wagged its head, and roared like a storm at sea.

"Let them toss a penny!" shouted a gray-haired man who clung to a guy-rope.

"Yes! yes! toss! toss!" shrieked the crowd.

A gust of wind struck the balloon and swung it around in mighty circles. Grimley climbed like a cat into the iron concentrating ring, where the ropes connecting the car and the giant gas bag met.

"You must decide between you which shall go and which shall stay," he said. "There's no time to lose; a breeze is springing up."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Toss a penny! toss! toss!" screamed the heaving sea of faces.

"It may be a toss for life," said the little aeronaut, fixing his great dark eyes on us; "but whatever it is, you must hurry. We're going to have a storm, and must leave the earth at once."

I drew a Canadian penny from my pocket and flipped it in the air.

"Heads!" cried my antagonist.

The crowd was suddenly silent, and parted to let the whirling coin fall on the ground.

It was tails. In a moment I was in the car, and the door was shut with a clang. Grimley fastened the end of the throttle-valve rope in the concentrating ring, dropped into the car, seized the handle of the steering crank, and shouted to his assistants to release the guy-ropes. In a moment the balloon was free, and leaped about wildly in the wind, held down only by the car.

"Let go!"

The men who had been desperately hanging on to the car leaped back. The crowd uttered a sound that might have come from the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

throat of a whirlwind, and surged backward and forward. It was the supreme moment.

But the balloon remained fast. The car was as immovable as Gibraltar. Something was wrong. The tragic thrill went out of the air. The heartless crowd laughed, and the romance and dash of the thing disappeared. It was one thing to summon up the soul for a wild sweep into the boundless air, and another thing to stand helplessly in the midst of that guffawing Canadian mob. It was the laughter of Niagara.

"She won't lift the flying machinery," said Grimley, with an oath. "Strip the wheels off! Lift the gearing out!"

"But my experiment!" pleaded the inventor of the airship, at the aeronaut's elbow. "You can steer where you will when you get up — right, left, up, down."

"Strip her, quick!" commanded Grimley.

In a few minutes the wheels and their fittings were torn out of the car, and a great sigh went up from the spectators as we shot swiftly away from the ground, the long drag-rope trailing down below us. The shouting became faint, and the upturned faces dim. Mount Royal

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

seemed to grow flat. Masses of purple clouds were piled up on the northern horizon, sun-tipped and beautiful. We were drifting across Montreal, and could see the old Cathedral of Notre Dame, the Champ de Mars, Jacques Cartier Square, the Bon-Secour Market, with its throngs; the acres of bright tin roofs glittering in the slanting sunlight, and beyond the crooked streets and confused noises of the Canadian metropolis, the St. Lawrence River, broad, blue, majestic, its splendid wharves crowded with shipping, and a procession of barges and timber rafts floating downward from the Great Lakes. The wind took us rapidly across the river, but the cold air over the water caused the gas in the balloon to contract, and Grimley had to pour sand out of one of the ballast sacks to check our downward movement.

It was a scene of great beauty. The descending sun struck a million sparkles in the clear flood beneath us, and the steamboats left feathery white trails behind them. The wonderful Victoria Bridge and its stone piers looked like a three-mile caterpillar stretched from shore to shore. Beyond were the swish-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ing Lachine Rapids, and to the left the settlement of the Cauganawauga Indians, guilty of nothing worse than birch-bark toys, deerskin moccasins, and maple sugar. The mighty landscape was filled with color. Towns, villages, woods, farms, streams, were spread out before the eye as far as the rim of the earth — the country of the hardest and simplest race in the Western hemisphere, peaceful, contented neighbors of the great republic.

The wind was rising and driving clouds across the sky. We could see the trees on St. Helen's Island bending in the breeze; but there was no sense of motion in the little iron car. We were going with the air and were untroubled. Grimley swung himself into the concentrating ring and crossed his legs under him, tailor fashion. There was something uncanny in the elfin figure, white face, bristling mustache, and bottomless black eyes, with the vast yellow sphere floating above him, and its great neck breathing forth evil-smelling vapor. The stillness of the place was almost unbearable.

“It’s funny how people rush to see a balloon

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ascension," he said. "It isn't the love of science that stirs them up, for any man that isn't a blithering idiot knows that you can't steer a balloon in a strong wind any more than you can force a full-rigged ship, with all her sails set, against a hurricane. If you could get a motor powerful enough to do it, the envelope of the balloon would collapse. No; men and women are still savage enough to enjoy the sight of human beings going to their death. It's the mystery of the thing that catches them. But it isn't only aeronauts and mesmerists who profit by the mystery in their business—doctors, preachers, poets, and all that tribe which lives on the borders of the unknown, live on mystery. There are thousands of fools looking up at us from the earth, and shuddering at terrors of their own imagination, while we sit here as safe and quiet as you please, and laugh at them. That's the way of the world. By the way"—looking at the barometer—"you'd better let out some ballast. We're falling." I poured out some sand from a sack. "That'll do. We have less than two hundred pounds of ballast, and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

we must use it sparingly, for the sun is setting, and it's hard to keep a balloon floating in the cold night air."

Grimley took an apple from his pocket and munched it slowly as he leaned back against the netting, with one hand thrown behind his head for greater comfort. The red glare of the sunset shone on the glistening curves of the balloon.

"You lead a strange life, Grimley."

The little captain of the air nodded his head, and a twinkle came into his eyes as he tossed the core of the apple away.

"In a way, yes; but, when you come to think of it, no stranger than the lives of many men who seem commonplace. There are thousands who keep themselves high in the world by feeding out money as ballast, just as I feed out sand. So long as they keep their breath to themselves, so long as they refrain from talking, they float. But the moment they open their mouths and let the emptiness out, down they come, just as a pull on that rope will release the gas through the throttle-valve and make us sink back again to the earth. Mys-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

tery's the cloak that shelters most of the humbug in the world. When I was a tailor nobody cared a tinker's damn for me; but when I became a mesmerist and a balloonist I was a person of consequence, although my life was not a tenth part as useful as when I worked at my trade. I've had an offer to lecture in the small towns on an electric belt that cures all sorts of diseases. There's mystery and money in the business, and I'm going to accept. The world likes to be tricked if it can be tickled at the same time. I'll call myself Professor Something-or-other — you must keep a straight face when you bamboozle them; you'll find that out in time."

Hours passed. The glow faded out of the sky, and the wind increased. Our sand ballast was going fast. The landscape darkened. We passed over a thin cloud. A gentle rumble of thunder came from the gathering clouds in the north. There was a glimmering play of lightning, and the drifting vapors gleamed for a moment in pure white tones. We could hear the storm in the trees below us.

Grimley made the anchor-rope ready, and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

hung the five-pronged anchor on the railing of the car. His rapid movements and half-suppressed mutterings convinced me that he was alarmed. He peered anxiously at the earth. Nothing could be seen but miles of trees thrashing in the gale.

“Our ballast is exhausted,” I said, as I threw the empty sack over.

“Cut the drag-rope to pieces and use it for ballast,” said the aeronaut. “We can’t land in trees. We’ll be torn to pieces.”

Foot by foot the drag-rope was severed and dropped over the railing. When it was all gone the balloon slowly sank again, and we could hear the rushing roar of the tempest in the murky woods. As we neared the wild tree-tops, the terrific speed at which we were going through the air became apparent. A thousand fierce voices seemed to call to us out of the agonized forest. And while we watched the furious storm sweeping over the land, there was not a breath of air stirring in the car, for we were travelling as fast as the gale.

“Unless we strike a clearing soon, we’re lost,” said Grimley, quietly, as he stooped and began

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

to tear up the wooden flooring of the car. "We must lighten her even if we have to throw our clothes away. Everything must go overboard but the anchor-rope; that's our only salvation. My God! what a night!"

Soon we had cleared the car of every movable thing, and Grimley climbed into the concentrating ring to free the end of the rope that worked the throttle-valve in the top of the balloon. We had risen a little, but the howling of the storm in the timber still sounded fearfully through the darkness. Grimley threw his jacket and shoes away.

"So long as we go with the wind, we're safe," said the little philosopher, with a mirthless laugh. "We're like a Wall Street plunger — if he goes on, he's ruined, if he stops, he's smashed up."

I was leaning against the side of the car and gazing down at the dark tumult, wondering vaguely why I had trusted my life to the strength of an envelope filled with gas, when, without warning, the fastening of the car door yielded to my weight, and I lurched out into the darkness. With a cry of despair I caught

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

at the swinging door and hung trembling between heaven and earth.

Looking up I saw Grimley staring at me from his perch. His strange black eyes seemed to draw me toward him. His nostrils were spread, and his face was deathly white. The whole power of the man was in the intense look he bent upon me. He beckoned gently with one hand.

"Come! come! come!" he commanded in a low voice. "Come! come!"

He looked like a great tomcat crouching in the rigging. The eyes glowed and flashed. I felt a sudden sense of strength, and began to pull myself upward, but the oscillation of the door made me weak again. The roaring of the tempest in the woods grew louder. A flash of lightning whitened the confused sky.

"Come! come!" urged the steady voice. "It's easy. There! there! Come!"

With a tremendous effort I managed to reach the solid rail of the car, and in another moment I was safe inside of it, but I shook from head to foot and cold drops of sweat stood on my fore-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

head. Grimley dropped into the car and shut the door.

"I tried to mesmerize you," he remarked. "Newspaper men are such sceptics that they're hard subjects, but I thought I might succeed with a young one like you. I could feel that I was helping you—heavens! what a close escape!"

But there was no time to discuss the matter. We were nearing the earth.

"Throw your field-glass over," said Grimley, as he returned to the iron ring and seized the throttle-rope. The balloon rose slightly. We were travelling with the speed of an express train.

"There's a clearing of some sort ahead," he cried. "I'm going to let her down"—and with a long pull on the rope he opened the throttle-valve at the top of the great gas bag.

We began to descend swiftly toward theraging billows of tree-tops, and the sounds were like the voices of wild animals—deep, fierce, and full of menace. The tempest carried us along so fast that we seemed to be moving over a heavy, frothing sea.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"We're going to strike and drag," shouted Grimley, with a warning gesture. "Lie down and cover your face or your eyes will be put out."

I threw myself in the bottom of the car and hid my face in my arms. The next moment there was a terrific crash, as we plunged into the forest, and the iron piping of the car bent and twisted while it tore through the grinding, clashing branches—ripping, splitting, smashing onward in the gloom, with giant arms striking blindly at us. For a moment the wind lifted us clear of the trees, and hurled us down again into the black tumult. Again we rebounded, and again we sank. The balloon quivered like a creature in pain. Each time the car went deeper into the trees, and soon it thundered against the solid trunks, and thrashed itself out of shape. There was something awful in that shapeless, shrieking, staggering riot—and yet I remember distinctly that, as I was thrown savagely about against the iron pipes, with the scent of the wounded pines and maples in my nostrils, I was thinking of the moment when I swung to and fro on the door, with Grimley's wonderful

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

eyes upon me, and the hand slowly beckoning me away from death. Looking up for an instant I could see the small figure tangled in the network around the ring, the throttle-rope wound around his waist, his arms tugging against the springs of the valve, and his face thrust through a mass of leaves torn off by the netting.

“Hold tight!” he yelled. “We’ll be clear in a moment.”

Just then we were swept into an open field, and the shattered car struck the ground heavily. The wind dragged us, lifted us, and dragged us again. We were on ploughed earth. For a moment the balloon leaned over like a tired monster, and the car stood still. Then the gale caught it and sent us flying against a loose stone fence, and we landed in another furrowed field.

“Let us jump!”

“No! no!” exclaimed Grimley, holding me back. “The first man who jumps will send the other to death, for she will go up like a flash.”

“Jump together!”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"Save the balloon," he pleaded. "It's worth three thousand dollars, and it's all I have."

We threw ourselves face downward in the car, and each time it settled itself on the ground we dragged handfuls of earth into it. Grimley managed to reach a heavy stone, and pulled it through the bars. The added weight steadied the car. We worked furiously, scraping and clutching at the damp furrows, until there were bushels of ballast in the car. The giant gas bag sank downward again. The throttle-valve rope was hauled tight and tied to the railing. Each moment the balloon grew weaker.

"I guess we're safe now," said my companion, as he ran with the end of the anchor-rope to a tree and made it fast. Then he stood for a moment, with his hands on his hips, and regarded the heaving balloon, starting from side to side at each gust of the lessening storm. His shirt sleeves were torn and there were drops of blood on his face.

"Now, my son," he said, "you know what a man must expect when he leaves his place in nature."

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

His eyes sparkled, and he twirled his mustaches.

"I think I'll go back to teaching dancing or mesmerism," he added, with a smile. "If that don't do, why I'll be a tailor again. That was simply hell back there. But you've got a good story to write, haven't you, and I—well, I've got a nasty job of mending to do. I tell you, when you try to fly too high, you simply get your trousers torn."

Now came the work of emptying the balloon of its gas. The wind had suddenly died out. Millions of fireflies twinkled in the darkness. The stars shone faintly in the blue patches between the drifting clouds. The fragrance of the pines mingled with the smell of ploughed earth. On all sides rose the black woods, the tops still trembling. Thousands of frogs piped shrilly in the summer air. Grimley hauled on the netting until he brought the top of the panting balloon to the ground, and holding the shutters of the valve open, he bade me pull down the net on the opposite side, to force the gas out more quickly. As I moved around the huge shape that lay throbbing and

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

swelling in the darkness, I could hear my companion's voice directing me. Gradually the sound grew feebler, and presently it ceased. There was something in the sudden silence that frightened me, and I ran to the other side to find Grimley lying face downward in a furrow, his arms under his body, and a stream of gas pouring about him from the balloon. He had swallowed the fumes and was unconscious, perhaps dead.

Dragging him away from the fluttering mouth of the balloon, I shook him, beat him, and chafed his hands. To the day of his death Grimley never knew what caused those bruises on his body. Gradually consciousness returned. He rose to his feet and fell. Again he stood up, staggering and reeling like a drunken man. I had fractured my right arm during the race through the tree-tops, and the pain became almost intolerable. I shouted for help, and the woods echoed back my voice.

Where there was ploughed ground there must be a house; but the twinkling myriads of fireflies defeated my search for a light in the distance. With my left arm around Grim-

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

ley's waist, we found a fence at the edge of the field and followed it. After a while we could see a steady yellow light. We waded through a swamp straight toward it. The chill of the water revived Grimley, and we pushed forward vigorously. Finally we saw a little white farmhouse, a yellow light shining through the windows. Then we reached a rough road. We raised our voices. The light was suddenly extinguished.

When we got to the door, the upper half of which was glass, we knocked loudly, but there was no response. We repeated the knocking; then we shouted.

There was a stir in the house, and a match was struck. Through the glass panes in the door we could see an old man with a bushy gray beard, a white gown reaching to his knees, a pointed red night-cap on his head. He lit a candle, took a shotgun from the wall, and came to the door with a catlike tread and vigilant eyes. He was a French Canadian farmer, prepared to defend his home against night intruders.

One glance at our bleeding faces and torn

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

clothes satisfied him, and he threw the door open. We explained the situation, and he made us a rough sleeping place on the floor. Then he blew the light out, and went back to his wife in the next room.

As he got into bed we could hear him explaining the matter in French.

“Two fools, heh! One fool wanted to fly like a bird, heh! and the other fool went to write about it, heh! Thank God and our Holy Lady I’m not a fool, and I’ll make them pay well for interfering with my field, heh! Balloon, heh! Bah! Pish!”

A rasping snore followed.

“That’s a devil of an ending,” groaned Grimley. “Some men don’t know a mystery when they see it.”

## CHAPTER XX

### *McKinley, the Forgiving*

STANDING at the very heart of the great exposition in Buffalo, where the commercial and political communion of all the Americas was celebrated in a city of fairy loveliness, President McKinley was shaking hands with the pouring, babbling crowd — the supreme moment of his triumphant life. As he stood there among his countrymen, crowned with success, garlanded with praise, he seemed the master-spirit of his continent, the archetype of its modern victories. He had raised the American flag beyond the seas, and had seen his country enter upon the leadership of nations. Only the day before he had announced a new national policy, broad, high, and far-reaching.

A slender man, a mere youth, pushed eagerly forward in the line that moved before the President. In his hand he carried a cheap revolver covered with a white handkerchief. As he

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

reached the President he raised his masked hand and fired two shots. A roar like the sound of the sea in a storm ascended from the swaying crowd. Then there was silence.

How frail beyond measurement are the plans of nations! The greatest of free nations had chosen William McKinley to be its leader; and the meanest, the most obscure, of its teeming millions—a wretched, blind failure in life, a human derelict drifting miserably in a land abounding in freedom and prosperity—had power enough to turn a national triumph into ashes—not in hatred, not in the service of some great cause, but even as a wanton urchin might set fire to some priceless library.

---

There were many among us standing in the quiet street before the house where the twenty-fifth President of the United States lay dying who had written bitter things of him in the stormy times of his public service, but none who knew him save as a man who forgave his enemies. And after all the years of pelting political criticism and ridicule, the crack of an

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

assassin's pistol had called us together to witness the most beautiful death-bed in history. For a week we paced the pavement about that hushed place of pain, watching the guardian bayonets of the sentries and listening to the telegraph instruments in the huddled white tents ticking out the story to the ends of the earth or bringing messages from kings and emperors; and when the end came, it was like a strain of Christian music, to be heard for all time. Our little daily pen-pricks were lost in the grandeur of that matchless death — forgotten and forgiven.

Hardly had the bullets pierced his body, when the President leaned forward and looked into the eyes of the assassin. It was a look of astonishment and reproach. Then, remembering the dignity befitting the President of the United States in the presence of a great audience, he walked steadily to a chair and sat down. The murderer writhed on the floor beneath his infuriate captors. The President looked at him again.

“Did—did he shoot me?” he asked.

“Yes.”

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Don’t hurt him.” His voice was full of pity.

The passionate multitude drew back in awe.

“My wife,” he faltered. “Be careful how you tell her—oh, be careful.”

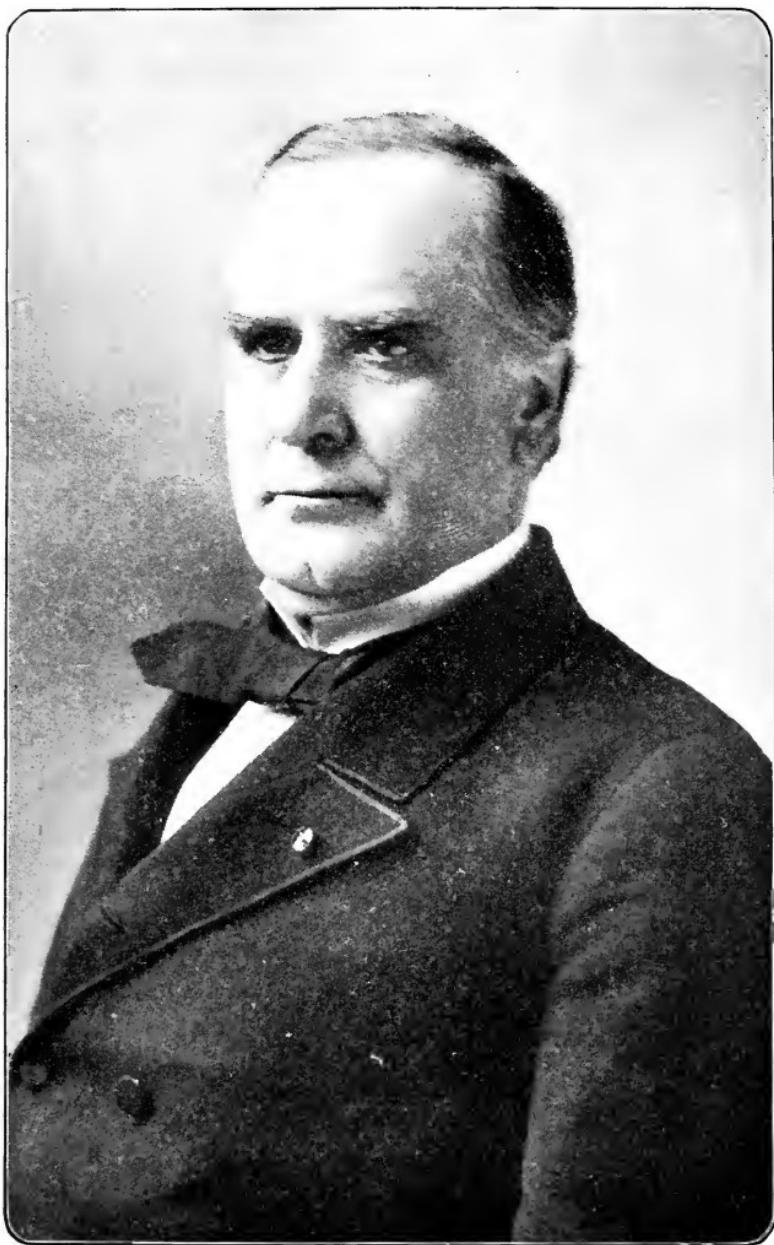
When the dying President was carried into the little hospital of the Pan-American Exposition, he turned to Mr. Cortelyou, his secretary, and said:—

“It must have been some poor misguided fellow.”

He seemed to be filled with amazement by the thought that any man in free America could have found a motive for seeking his death. His every word expressed this bewilderment. And when the surgeons pressed around him in that first terrible hour he turned his thoughts heavenward and bore himself like a Christian hero.

“Mr. President,” said Dr. Mann, the operating surgeon, “we intend to cut in at once. We lost one President by delay, and we do not intend to lose you.”

“I am in your hands,” murmured the President.



*William McKinley*



## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

He was prepared for the ordeal and lifted upon the operating table. The surgeons were ready to administer ether. He opened his eyes and saw that he was about to enter a sleep from which he might never awaken. Then the lids closed flutteringly. The white face was suddenly lit by a tender smile. All the angel there was in him came to his face. The wan lips stirred, and the surgeons listened.

“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.”

His voice was soft and clear. Tears rolled down the faces of the listeners. The President raised his chest and sighed. His lips moved again.

“Thy will be done.”

Dr. Mann stood with the keen knife in his hand — dread symbol of human science. There was a lump in his throat.

“For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory.”

The eyelids fluttered gently, beads of cold moisture stood on the bloodless brow. There was silence. So he entered the darkness; and if there is a loftier scene in the history

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

of Christian statesmen and rulers, there is no record of it.

That was the beginning of eight days of national agony. The President was carried to a room in the house of his host, John G. Milburn, and all human power was called upon to save him. As he lay there, teaching the world how a good man can die, thoughts of his great responsibilities as a leader pressed upon him.

It is no exaggeration to say that the speech delivered by the President on the day before he was struck down was the greatest act of statesmanship of his life. His plea for a policy of commercial reciprocity was an appeal for peace with the world, an effort to avert a tariff war by united Europe against the United States. He had recognized the signs of approaching conflict and he had felt the stubborn opposition of men in his own party to his policy of conciliation. There was but one thing to do — appeal to the people. All through his summer rest from official routine in Ohio he had worked out his last great utterance. It was to be at once a message of

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

warning to America and a signal of peace to Europe.

"God and man have linked the nations together," he said to the mighty crowd stretched out before him. "No nation can longer be indifferent to any other. And as we are brought more and more in touch with each other, the less occasion is there for misunderstandings, and the stronger the disposition, when we have differences, to adjust them in the court of arbitration, which is the noblest forum for the settlement of international disputes. . . . The period of exclusiveness is past. The expansion of our trade and commerce is the pressing problem. Commercial wars are unprofitable. A policy of good will and friendly trade relations will prevent reprisals. Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the times; measures of retaliation are not. . . . Our earnest prayer is that God will graciously vouchsafe prosperity, happiness, and peace to all our neighbors, and like blessings to all the peoples and Powers of earth."

These were the President's last words as a statesman and leader. How had the world

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

received them? Even in his dying hours he longed to hear the answer. When the first agony of his wounds was over, he sent for his faithful secretary. Mr. Cortelyou entered the room and stood beside the stricken chief.

"It's mighty lonesome in here," said the President.

"I know it is."

The President's eyes brightened, and the old familiar wrinkles appeared in his face as he turned eagerly to his assistant.

"How did they like my speech?" he asked.

"It is regarded as one of the greatest you have ever made, and has attracted more attention than anything you have said for years."

The President smiled and looked earnestly into Mr. Cortelyou's eyes.

"How did they like it abroad?"

"It has attracted considerable attention abroad, and everywhere the comment is favorable."

"Isn't that good?" And he spoke no more of things political, having heard the echo of his cry for peace.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

In the afternoon of his last day on earth the President began to realize that his life was slipping away and that the efforts of science could not save him. He asked Dr. Rixey to bring the surgeons in. One by one the surgeons entered and approached the bedside. When they were gathered about him the President opened his eyes and said :—

“It is useless, gentlemen ; I think we ought to have prayer.”

The dying man crossed his hands on his breast and half-closed his eyes. There was a beautiful smile on his countenance. The surgeons bowed their heads. Tears streamed from the eyes of the white-clad nurses on either side of the bed. The yellow radiance of the sun shone softly in the room.

“Our Father, which art in Heaven,” said the President, in a clear, steady voice.

The lips of the surgeons moved.

“Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done—”

The sobbing of a nurse disturbed the still air. The President opened his eyes and closed them again.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

“Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven.”

A long sigh. The sands of life were running swiftly. The sunlight died out and raindrops dashed against the windows.

“Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

Another silence. The surgeons looked at the dying face and the trembling lips.

“For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”

“Amen,” whispered the surgeons.

Outside, an army of newspaper writers moved silently about the tents of the telegraph operators, and the bayonets of the sentries pacing slowly on all sides glittered in the afternoon light. Beyond the clear spaces of roped-off streets were the awed crowds. Even the policemen spoke in hushed voices. As the surgeons or Cabinet officers or other friends of the dying President appeared, they were engulfed by the eager seekers for news. Vice-President Roosevelt—he who was soon to wear the awful

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

mantle of authority — was summoned from his distant hunting camp in the mountains. Tender words of sympathy from the rulers of all nations came flashing over the wires.

Darkness descended on the scene. The President was conscious again. He asked for his wife. Presently she came to him, leaning feebly on the arm of Mr. Cortelyou. As she reached the side of her husband and lover, — who had read to her every day at twilight for years from the Bible,—she sank into a chair, and leaning her frail form over the white counterpane, she took his hands in hers and kissed them. There was a group of friends in the room, and they drew away from the sacred spectacle. The light of the two candles behind the screen was reflected faintly on the white ceiling and tinted walls. It sparkled on the wedding ring.

The President's eyes were closed. His breath came slowly. As he felt the touch of his wife's lips, he smiled. It was to be their last meeting.

“Good-by! Good-by, all!”

Mrs. McKinley gazed into the white face of the martyr, and struggled for strength to bear it.

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

"It is God's way; His will, not ours, be done."

The President turned his face slightly toward his wife. A look of ineffable love shone in the haggard features. She held his hands as a child clings to its mother. The ticking of the clock in the next room could be heard. Once more the President spoke.

"Nearer my God — to — Thee —"

His soul was on his lips. His face was radiant.

"E'en tho' it be a cross —"

There was a moment of utter silence.

"That has been my inextinguishable prayer."

His voice was almost inaudible.

"It is — God's — way."

It was the last thought and the last word of the gentle President.

As the night wore on, the signs of life grew fainter. One by one the members of the Cabinet, the relatives, and the intimate friends of the dying statesman were brought into the room by Mr. Cortelyou. One by one they stood at the bedside and took farewell of the

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

still form,—grave senators, old schoolmates, young men who had followed him in the fierce struggles of politics, statesmen who had sat with him in council, men and women of his blood. They moved like shadows. He neither saw them nor heard them. Midnight came, and yet he gave no sign.

Hope brooded in the waiting crowds. It was known that Dr. Janeway, the famous specialist, was on his way from New York. Who could tell but that the skill and knowledge of the great physician might turn back the force of death, and give the President to his people again? Oh, the agony of that hour! Men walked in the streets as softly as though they were in the sickroom.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by a distant sound of a galloping horse's feet. Nearer and nearer it came through the darkness. The ropes stretched across the street were dropped, and the voiceless multitude parted as an open carriage drawn by a foam-covered, smoking steed swept madly up to the house of sorrow. A man leaped from the carriage and ran to the house at the top of his speed. It

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

was Dr. Janeway. The hundreds of newspaper correspondents swarmed eagerly against the ropes, and waited for a word of hope. So great was the stillness that the noise of the telegraph instruments in the tents tortured the nerves.

Alas! no. The President was beyond the help of human hands. Not all the doctors in all the schools could call him back from the shadows.

At a quarter after two o'clock in the morning Dr. Rixey sat at the bedside holding the President's wrist in one hand and an open watch in the other. Tick! tick! tick! The breath stirred the white nostrils. Tick! tick! tick! The smiling face was rigid. Dr. Rixey laid the President's hand down gently and closed his watch.

"The President is dead," he said.

Within thirty seconds the telegraph wires were carrying the news to a thousand centres of civilization; and the tired newspaper men went to their beds for rest before beginning the history of a new President; for the hand of the assassin might slay a beloved President, but

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

it was powerless to interrupt the story of the nation.

---

“In God's own might  
We gird us for the coming fight,  
And, strong in Him, whose cause is ours  
In conflict with unholy powers,  
We grasp the weapons He has given,—  
The Light, the Truth, and Love of Heaven.”

---

Whatever else history may say of William McKinley, those who knew him will bear witness to the forgiveness that shone through his character. It was the crown of his life, the virtue that distinguished him among American statesmen. He died without an enemy, forgiving the hand that shed his blood.

“My one ambition is to be known as the President of the whole people,” he said to me when I last saw him in the White House. “I have no other desire than to win that name. After all, no American can harm his country without harming himself. This government was created by the people for themselves, and, night or day, that thought is always in my

## *ON THE GREAT HIGHWAY*

---

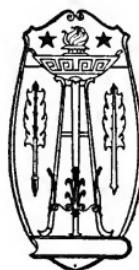
mind. We are all together in this great political experiment. Some hard things have been written and said of me, but that sort of thing is a necessary incident of popular government. It must always be so. My plan is to forget the evil and remember only the good. I never despair of converting an opponent into a supporter. The bitterest critic I have can come to see me, and he will find a warm hand to greet him. It is the only way for an American to live."

So he lived and so he died. Men of all parties will remember him as McKinley, the Forgiving.

"Let us ever remember," he said in his last speech, "that our interest is in concord, not conflict; and that our real eminence rests in the victories of peace, not those of war."



*Selections from*  
LOTHROP PUBLISHING COMPANY'S  
*List of Books*





# D'ri and I

By  
**IRVING  
BACHELLER,**  
author of  
“EBEN  
HOLDEN.”  
Bound in  
red silk cloth,  
illustrated  
cover,  
gilt top,  
rough edges.  
Eight  
drawings by  
F. C. Yohn.  
Size, 5 x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.  
Price, \$1.50



A Tale of  
Daring Deeds  
in the  
Second War  
with the  
British.  
Being the  
Memoirs of  
Colonel  
Ramon Bell,  
U.S.A. And  
a Romance of  
Sturdy  
Americans  
and Dainty  
French  
Demoiselles.

#### PHILADELPHIA PRESS:

“An admirable story, superior in literary workmanship and imagination to ‘Eben Holden.’”

#### NEW YORK WORLD:

“Pretty as are the heroines, gallant as Captain Bell proves himself, the reader comes back with even keener zest to the imperturbable D'ri. He is a type of the American—grit, grim humor, rough courtesy, and all. It is a great achievement, upon which Mr. Bacheller is to be heartily congratulated, to have added to the list of memorable figures in American fiction, two such characters as D'ri and Eben Holden.”

#### BOSTON BEACON:

“Mr. Bacheller has the art of the born story teller. ‘D'ri and I’ promises to rival ‘Eben Holden’ in popularity.”

#### ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT:

“The admirers of ‘Eben Holden,’ and they were legion, will welcome another story by its author, Irving Bacheller, who in ‘D'ri and I’ has created quite as interesting a character as the sage of the North land who was the hero of the former story.”

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston

# Eben Holden

## A Tale of the North Country

By IRVING BACHELLER. Bound in red silk cloth,  
decorative cover, gilt top, rough edges. Size, 5×7¾.  
Price, \$1.50

THE most popular book in America. Within eight months after publication it had reached its two hundred and fiftieth thousand. The most American of recent novels, it has indeed been hailed as the long looked for "American novel."

William Dean Howells *says of it*: "I have read 'Eben Holden' with a great joy in its truth and freshness. You have got into your book a kind of life not in literature before, and you have got it there simply and frankly. It is 'as pure as water and as good as bread.'"

Edmund Clarence Stedman *says of it*: "It is a forest-scented, fresh-aired, bracing, and wholly American story of country and town life."

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston

# J. Devlin—Boss

## A Romance of American Politics

By FRANCIS CHURCHILL WILLIAMS. 12mo, \$1.50

THIS is a story of the typical figure in the shaping of American life. "Jimmy," shrewd, strong, resourceful, clean-hearted, is vital; and the double love story which is woven about him gives an absolutely true and near view of the American boss. The revelations of political intrigue — from the governing of a ward to the upsetting of the most sensational Presidential Convention which this country has seen — are, as sketched in this romance, of intense interest; the scenes and characters in them are almost photographic. But above all of these stands Jimmy himself, unscrupulous as a politician, honorable as a man — Jimmy, the playmate, the counselor, and the lover of the winsome, clear-eyed Kate, the stanch friend of herself and of her son — Jimmy, with a straight word always for those who are true to him, a helping hand for all who need it, and a philosophy which is irresistible.

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston

# When the Land was Young

Being the True Romance of Mistress Antoinette  
Huguenin and Captain Jack Middleton

By  
**LAFAYETTE**  
**McLAWS.**  
Bound in  
green cloth,  
illustrated  
cover,  
gilt top,  
rough edges.  
Six drawings  
by  
Will Crawford  
Size, 5 x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ .  
Price, \$1.50



THE heroine, Antoinette Huguenin, a beauty of King Louis' Court, is one of the most attractive figures in romance; while Lumulgee, the great war chief of the Choctaws, and Sir Henry Morgan, the Buccaneer Knight and terror of the Spanish Main, divide the honors with hero and heroine. The time was full of border

wars between the Spaniards of Florida and the English colonists, and against this historical background Miss McLaws has thrown a story that is absorbing, dramatic, and brilliant.

**NEW YORK WORLD:**

"Lovely Mistress Antoinette Huguenin! What a girl she is!"

**NEW YORK JOURNAL:**

"A story of thrill and adventure."

**SAVANNAH NEWS:**

"Among the entertaining romances based upon the colonial days of American history this novel will take rank as one of the most notable—a dramatic and brilliant story."

**ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT:**

"If one is anxious for a thrill, he has only to read a few pages of 'When the Land was Young' to experience the desired sensation. . . . There is action of the most virile type throughout the romance. . . . It is vividly told, and presents a realistic picture of the days "when the land was young."

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston

# The Potter and the Clay

## A Romance of To-day

By MAUD HOWARD PETERSON. Bound in blue cloth,  
decorative cover, rough edges, gilt top. Four drawings by  
Charlotte Harding. Size, 5 x 7¾. Price \$1.50

ONE of the strongest and most forceful of recent novels, now attracting marked attention, and already one of the most successful books of the present year. The characters are unique, the plot is puzzling, and the action is remarkably vivid. Readers and critics alike pronounce it a romance of rare strength and beauty. The scenes are laid in America, Scotland, and India; and one of the most thrilling and pathetic chapters in recent fiction is found in Trevelyan's heroic self-sacrifice during the heart-rending epidemic of cholera in the latter country. The story throughout is one of great strength.

Margaret E. Sangster: "From the opening chapter, which tugs at the heart, to the close, when we read through tears, the charm of the book never flags. It is not for one season, but of abiding human interest."

Minot J. Savage: "I predict for the book a very large sale, and for the authoress brilliant work in the future."

Boston Journal: "One of the most remarkable books of the year. Brilliant, but better than that, tender."

Lothrop Publishing Company  Boston

# A Carolina Cavalier

## A Romance of the Carolinas

By GEORGE CARY EGGLESTON

Bound in red silk cloth, illustrated cover, gilt top, rough edges.  
Six drawings by C. D. Williams. Size, 5 x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ . Price \$1.50

**A** strong, delightful romance of Revolutionary days, most characteristic of its vigorous author, George Cary Eggleston. The story is founded on absolute happenings and certain old papers of the historic Rutledges of Carolina. As a love story, it is sweet and true; and as a patriotic novel it is grand and inspiring. The historic setting, and the fact that it is distinctively and enthusiastically American, have combined to win instant success for the book.

**Louisville Courier Journal:** "A fine story of adventure, teeming with life and aglow with color."

**Cleveland World:** "There is action, plot, and fire. Love and valor and loyalty play a part that enhances one's respect for human nature."

**Baltimore Sun:** "The story is full of movement. It is replete with adventure. It is saturated with love."

---

Lothrop Publishing Company  Boston

# A Princess of the Hills

## A Story of Italy

By MRS. BURTON HARRISON. Bound in Green Cloth, Decorative Cover, Gilt Top, Rough Edges. Four Drawings by ORSON LOWELL. Size,  $7\frac{3}{4} \times 5$ . \$1.50.

MRS. BURTON HARRISON is a charming story-teller. Unlike her other novels, "A Princess of the Hills" is not a romance of New York society, nor of Colonial times, but is a story of Italian life. An American tourist retreats from a broken engagement at Venice to that section of the North Italian Alps known as the Dolomites. Here he encounters a daughter of the soil, the last of a noble race, but now a humble peasant girl,—a real princess of the hills. The complications of the situation ; the aroused interest of the American ; the rival lovers, English, American, and Italian ; the fierceness of the feud this love engenders ; the struggle for possession and its unexpected outcome and dénouement,—are told with masterly skill and with an interest that remains unflagging to the end.

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston

# The Kidnapped Millionaires

A Story of Wall Street and Mexico

By FREDERICK U. ADAMS. 12mo, cloth, \$1.50

ONE of the most timely and startling stories of the day. A plan to form a great Newspaper Trust, evolved in the brain of an enterprising special correspondent, leads to the kidnapping of certain leading Metropolitan millionaires and marooning them luxuriously on a Mexican headland; the results—the panic in Wall Street, the search for the kidnapped millionaires, their discovery and rescue are the chief motives of the story, which has to do also with trusts, syndicates, newspaper methods, and all the great monetary problems and financial methods of the day. The story is full of adventure, full of humor, and full of action and surprises, while the romance that develops in its progress is altogether charming and delightful.

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston









14 DAY USE  
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED  
LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or  
on the date to which renewed.

Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

22 Apr '59 JB	
<b>RECEIVED (N)</b>	7 Dec '64 L M
APR 8 1959	NOV 29 1964 - 3 PM
2 JUL '60 AR	
REC'D LD	13 MAR 1965 8:30 AM
JUN 5 1960	REC'D LD
7 Sep '60 TD	MAR 13 '65 - 3 PM
JUN 3 1980	REC'D LD
REC'D LD APR 9 '65	- 6 PM
SEP 7 1960	JUL 16 1968 - 4:30 PM <b>RECEIVED #8</b>
LD 21A-50m-9-'58B (6889s10)476B	JUL 5 '68 - 8 AM

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

LOAN DEPT.  
LOAN DEPT.

2764

